

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE UTILITY OF THE CHILD-SUPPORT GRANT:
PERCEPTIONS FROM BENEFICIARIES.**



A Research Report Presented to

**The Department of Social Work
School of Human and Community Development
Faculty of Humanities
The University of the Witwatersrand**

**In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Masters of Arts in the field of Social Development**

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March 2015**

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this research report is my own unaided work, and that the cited sources have been acknowledged by means of complete references

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Sally Chipu Matuku

March 2015

DEDICATION

This research report is dedicated to my soon to be husband Brighton .C. Murambinda for his support and encouragement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the following people who made it possible for this study to be successful:

My special thank you goes to the Lord God Almighty who has been there for me and made this a success.

I greatly appreciate my supervisor Professor Edwell Kaseke for his patience and for all the guidance and support that he provided me with throughout the research project.

My gratitude goes to all the women from Tembisa community who participated in the study for this research would not have been possible without their input and contribution.

A special thank you to my mother and late father for instilling the value of education in me, thank you for everything.

I would also like to thank my brother Victor Matuku and Olinah Matuku my sister-in-love for being there for me and for taking up a parental role in supporting and encouraging me up to this day.

My gratitude goes to my loving fiancé Brighton Murambinda for always being there and for encouraging me and always reminding me that I can do it.

My appreciation also goes to my friend and colleague Avril Mafemba for being there when I needed a hand.

I would like to thank Dr Anniah Mupawose for her guidance and support as my co-supervisor.

Lastly I would like to thank Matshidiso Sello who was very helpful during my fieldwork.

ABSTRACT

Poverty is one of South Africa's greatest challenges and in response to this; the government provides social security in the form of social grants such as the child support grant. The grant is a cash transfer paid to the primary caregiver of a child below the age of 18 years. Despite the provision of the child support grant, poverty remains a challenge to those who rely on the grant as their only source of income. The study explored the perceptions of recipients of the child-support grant on the utility of the grant. The study adopted a qualitative research approach which was exploratory and descriptive in nature. In-depth face-to-face interviews were conducted with a sample of 12 participants from Tembisa who were selected using the snowballing sampling technique. Thematic content analysis was used. The findings revealed that the grant was used for educational expenses and for food or clothing. However, some caregivers abused the grant by purchasing alcohol and using the grant for gambling. The study revealed that the grant provides households with income security, improves school attendance and contributes towards improved access to health care. However, the study also revealed that there were challenges associated with the provision of the grant. Firstly, participants reported that the grant was inadequate. Secondly, the grant was abused by the caregivers. Lastly, participants cited poor administration procedures and lack of clarity on the required documentation as other challenges. Participants felt that, holding caregivers accountable by monitoring the utilisation of the grant and creating employment opportunities could mitigate these challenges. The study concludes that the grant provides children with a safety net and enables them to access basic services. The recommendations made are that caregivers should be engaged in activities which allow them to become self-reliant so as to minimize dependence on the grant and to ensure that applicants are fully aware of the requirements needed when initiating an application. The findings of this study have potential to influence social welfare policy-makers to address the challenges associated with the provision of the grant. The findings of this study also have potential to enable policy makers to establish ways of ensuring sustainable provision of the grant.

Key Words

Child Support Grant, children, poverty, social security, caregivers

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the study. It outlines the statement of the problem and rationale of the study, the theoretical framework that was adopted, a summary of the research methodology and concludes by providing the structure of the research report.

Although South Africa has attained more than twenty years of democracy, the hardships or challenges that the majority of children growing up in post-1994 South Africa continues to face are alarming, (Dieden and Gustafsson, 2003). Being poor in South Africa has become the biggest challenge that people face. The nature of poverty faced by the country is immense such that it's viewed as a key social, economic and political problem (Statistics South Africa, 2013). Due to such facts, it has become a huge priority for the country to introduce measures that will work towards alleviating this problem of poverty and the provision of social security is one of the country's key strategies of fighting this calamity called poverty.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Poverty is one of the greatest challenges facing South Africa. According to Statistics South Africa (2014), the poverty headcount in the country is 56, 8%. Poverty impacts negatively on the welfare of children. The vulnerability of children has been exacerbated by HIV. Many children have become orphans and this has led to the phenomenon of child-headed households. The majority of the poor rely on support from the state. Dieden and Gustafsson (2003, p. 326) argue that "children constitute a considerable proportion of the poor". In response to these challenges and more, the South African government has made provisions for social assistance in the form of grants which are issued as income transfers. The key purpose of the grant is to alleviate poverty since the majority of South Africans are impoverished and it has been noted that the grant does play a key role in alleviating poverty. However, poverty remains a challenge to those who rely on the grant as their only source of income because the grant is not able to sustain both the child and primary caregiver. It is therefore possible that the child-support grant might not be fulfilling its purpose because of the low benefit level, (Smit, 2008 as cited in Kaseke, 2010).

The aim of the study was to explore the perceptions of beneficiaries of the Child Support Grant on its utility. It is hoped that the findings of the study will influence social welfare policy-makers to review the grant with a view to addressing some of the challenges faced by beneficiaries. It is also hoped that the results of the study will motivate social service professionals, particularly social workers to establish ways of ensuring that the grant is not abused and to hold responsible persons accountable if the children are not taken care of due to misuse or abuse of the money. It is also hoped that the findings of the study will enable policy makers to establish ways of ensuring sustainable provision of the grant.

1.3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Social Development

The theoretical framework that guided this study is the social development approach. Social development is a relatively new and holistic approach to social welfare. Patel (2005) argues that it is holistic and all-encompassing as it focuses on broader social processes and structures. According to Midgley (1995, p. 25), social development is “a process of planned social change designed to promote the well-being of the population as a whole in conjunction with a dynamic process of economic development”. Patel (2005, p. 30) also states that “The social development approach is essentially a pluralist approach focusing on strong government action and partnership between individuals, groups, communities, civil society and the private sector”.

Social development is an approach that calls for purposeful intervention from the state through social policies and legislations which are protective and regulatory with a view to eliminating obstacles which hinder the realisation of equity and social advancement in society, (Patel, 2005). The provision of the Child Support Grant is one example of purposeful intervention by the state. Midgley (1995, p. 125) talks about the statist approach to social development which he refers to as “The belief that social development can best be promoted by governments, their specialised agencies, policy makers, planners and administrators”. According to the statist approach to social development, the government is viewed as the ultimate collective suggesting that it knows what the needs of the people are and therefore has the responsibility to meet these needs, (Midgley, 1995). It is also the state’s responsibility to ensure the implementation of social development policies as well as harmonizing both the social and economic policies. Midgley (1995) in fact

states that the need to harmonise social and economic policies is primarily because social development cannot occur without economic development and economic development will be meaningless when there is no social development hence the two are inextricably linked.

Midgley (1995) postulates that a key strategy of meeting the people's needs and promoting social development is the 'Basic Needs Approach'. This approach was formally adopted by the International Labour Organisation's Employment Conference hosted in Geneva, 1976 where countries agreed that due to the incidence of poverty in developing countries, there was need to formulate immediate solutions which would deal with the challenges of poverty and deprivation, (Midgley, 1995). The South African social security system thus seeks to reduce poverty amongst the most vulnerable in society particularly children, the elderly as well as people living with disabilities amongst others.

According to the Republic of South Africa (1997), social security is a crucial poverty alleviation strategy which also results in active redistribution of wealth. Midgley (1995), states that the need for social security is amongst the needs that the state has to meet and one of the strategies adopted by the basic needs strategy is identifying the target or vulnerable groups in society and also targeting the neediest groups rather than flooding the entire population with resources and services. Dell (1979, p. 292) highlighted that the basic needs strategy promotes "a more equitable distribution of income and wealth". The child support grant represents an intervention by the state that targets vulnerable and needy members of society. The child support grant is intended to enable recipients to meet their basic needs and thus improve the quality of life. It is also assumed that the child support grant has other positive outcomes that enable recipients to be integrated into the main stream of society. The child support grant thus falls within the realm of the basic needs approach in social development as it is targeted at the most needy.

1.4. RESEARCH FOCUS

1.4.1. Research Question

What are the perceptions of the recipients of the child support grant on the utility of the grant?

1.4.2. Aim of the Study

The aim of the study was to explore the perceptions of the recipients of the child-support grant on the utility of the grant.

1.4.3. Objectives of the Study

- To explore how the recipients of the child support grant utilise the grant.
- To establish perceptions about the outcomes of the child support grant.
- To identify the challenges associated with the provision of the child support grant.

1.5. AN OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research approach and the research design was explorative-descriptive in nature. The research was conducted in Tembisa community where a sample of twelve participants was drawn using the snow balling sampling technique. A semi-structured interview schedule was used to guide the face-to-face interviews that were conducted to collect data. These interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed and in analysing the data, the researcher made use of the thematic content analysis method.

1.6. OUTLINE OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

This research report comprises of five chapters. The first chapter provides an introduction to the study and covers the following, statement of the problem, rationale for the study, the theoretical framework which informed this study, the research question, aim and objectives of the study and an overview of the research methodology. Chapter two provides a detailed literature review focusing on the concept of poverty and its effects on children within the South African context, legal instruments that underpin social security in South Africa, the nature and scope of the South African Social Security System, a historical background of the child support grant, the different forms of social assistance for children, the usefulness of the grant as well as some of the key challenges which are associated with the provision of grants for children. Chapter three's focus is on the research design and methodology which were employed in this study. Chapter four focuses on the presentation and analysis of the main findings. Lastly chapter five provides a summary of the main findings, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews literature on child poverty in general as well as a review of literature on poverty and child poverty within the South African context. The literature reviewed in this chapter also focuses on the South African social grant provisions for children, the different types of grants provided to children as well as the history of the child support grant. The chapter also reviews literature on how social security is conceptualised, the various instruments that underpin social security in South Africa as well literature on the usefulness of the grant. Furthermore, the chapter reviews literature on some of the key challenges which are associated with the provision of grants for children.

2.2 GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON POVERTY

2.2.1 Defining Poverty

According to Tanumihardjo Anderson, Kaufer-Horwitz, Bode, Emenaker, Haqq, et al. (2007) poverty is a global dilemma hence, the first goal of the Millennium Development Goals aims to eradicate poverty and hunger. Bakhit, von Ravensburg, Munker, Walter and Walter (1996) argue that poverty is regarded as a very complicated issue. Poverty is regarded as a complex concept because it is defined from different perspectives therefore it is defined in various ways. According to Lines (2008), poverty is a heavily contested concept which is elusive and complex because it has several meanings. Being poor does not only refer to lack of income but it also involves elements such as being socially excluded or isolated for instance from decision making processes. In this regard, poverty for some refers to this lack of involvement and participation in societal activities and lack of one's voice being heard. Bakhit et al. (1996) argue that from a mechanical perception, poverty refers to lack of income. Catagay (1998) adds that traditionally poverty was defined as a lack of income, resources and assets which results in deprivation of materials and resources. This definition of poverty implies that when one does not have money as well as other material assets people regard such an individual as poor. The definition does not

take into the multidimensional nature of what being poor entails. However, it is important to note that poverty can also be viewed from a mental or cultural perspective where it refers to being isolated, powerless or hopeless, (Bakhit et al. (1996).

Given these various manifestations of poverty, the United Nations in 1995 formulated a comprehensive definition of poverty at the World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen. According to United Nations (1995, p. 57) “Poverty has various manifestations, including lack of income and productive resources to ensure sustainable livelihoods, hunger and malnutrition, ill-health, limited or lack of access to education and other basic services, increased morbidity and mortality from illness, homelessness and inadequate housing, unsafe environments and social discrimination and exclusion”. Poverty should therefore not be viewed from one angle as the concept is multidimensional.

2.2.2 Forms of poverty and its magnitude

2.2.2.1 Absolute Poverty

Absolute poverty refers to the scarcity of basic needs which include food, safe drinking water, shelter and clothing and it results in an individual’s life being precarious or failing to maintain a healthy body, (Seleoane, 2008). According to Alcock (2006), this definition is considered to be objective and is based on the idea of subsistence or the minimum which is required in order for one to sustain a life. Jensen (2009) argues that absolute poverty is rare in developed countries such as the United States of America but more prevalent in developing countries, particularly in Asia and Africa. According to the Human Development Report (2014, p. 71), “Some 1.2 billion people live on less than \$1.25 a day, and 2.7 billion live on less than \$2.50 a day”. The \$1.25 and \$2.50 a day criterion of defining poverty was adopted by the World Bank and it is widely recognised and applied to international and global assessments of poverty, Ward (2009) in Mack, Schraim, Klasen and Pogge (2009).

2.2.2.2 Relative Poverty

According to Graaff (2007) relative poverty is based on the idea of how people perceive themselves as poor in relation to others within their communities. Thus, as Bakhit et al. (1996) argue, relative poverty takes into consideration people’s expectations, norms, values as well as

customs of people who live within a specific community or society” in comparison to other groups or individuals.

2.2.2.3 Multidimensional Poverty

The United Nations’ definition of poverty alluded to earlier on incorporates issues of social exclusion and discrimination and not merely a lack of income and adequate basic needs. This definition is comprehensive and refers to poverty not only as lack of income but includes being excluded from decision making processes, political and social participation amongst others. Alcock (2006) indicates that multidimensional poverty refers to a lack of both socially perceived necessities and low income. The Human Development Report (2014) states that 1.5 billion people live in multidimensional poverty. Multidimensional poverty tends to have a geographical component and it is higher in rural than urban areas for instance in countries like Ethiopia, Somalia, Burkina Faso and Niger, (Human Development Report, 2014).

2.3 CHILD POVERTY WITHIN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

Although it is more than twenty years of attainment of democracy in South Africa, the majority of the South African children growing up in post-1994 South Africa continue to face severe challenges, (Dieden and Gustafsson, 2003). As Khumalo (2013, p.5643) further states, “Poverty remains one of the worst human calamities in the world especially in Africa”. Bak (2004) also highlights that poverty and mass-poverty are South Africa’s biggest challenges. According to Khumalo (2013), South Africa is no exception as it battles high rates of poverty just like its poor neighbouring countries in Africa despite South Africa being a middle-income country. The South African poverty headcount is 56, 8%, (Statistics South Africa, 2014). Thus, poverty is viewed as a key social, economic and political problem, (Statistics South Africa, 2013).

According to the Alliance for Children’s Entitlement to Social Security (ACCESS) (2002), there are numerous and diverse causes of poverty and these include an increase in unemployment rates and the impact of HIV/AIDS epidemic on breadwinners within the South African Households. These factors result in child poverty increasing, (ACCESS, 2002). Hall (2012) argues that the rates of child poverty in South Africa are extremely high as 60% of children were reported to be living below the poverty line of R575 per month. However, the massive expansion in Child Support

Grant provisions has significantly contributed towards poverty reduction (Hall, 2012). Dieden and Gustafsson (2003) argue that due to the prevalence of HIV/AIDS, the majority of children are left as orphans whilst a number of them are born HIV positive and this negatively impacts on society. These orphans are vulnerable and at risk of becoming heads of households which results in the severity of poverty. Dieden and Gustafsson (2003) further argue that such challenges make South African children vulnerable to poverty and this is frightening given that when one grows up in poverty, the consequences are long-lasting and this may result in chronic/intergenerational poverty.

2.3.1 Intergenerational Poverty

The spells of poverty in childhood have serious effects which stretch across an individual's entire life and this reinforces the persistence of intergenerational poverty (Harper, Marcus and Moore, 2003). Barrientos and DeJong (2006, p. 537) also argue that "Children are disproportionately represented among the income-poor, many suffer from severe deprivation, and their poverty and vulnerability has cumulative and long term consequences. Furthermore, Hall and Woolard (2012, p. 32) highlighted that "Children who are born to poor parents and grow up in poor households are likely to remain poor, and in this way, the inequalities of apartheid are reproduced". When a country has high levels of inequalities it affects children and when it prevails within a generation that has children it reflects a high probability that the inequality will persist into future generations resulting in intergenerational inequalities as well.

Lee and Bowen (2006) argue that the effects of intergenerational poverty operate through a variety of channels for instance, childhood poverty is strongly associated with less schooling opportunities and academic achievement, and these in turn have long lasting effects on the child's future particularly the child's productive capacity and standard of living. Furthermore, Barrientos and DeJong (2006) postulate that the majority of developing countries with cases of childhood poverty often have children who suffer from malnutrition and stunted growth. This has ripple effects particularly on the girls as they have higher chance of giving birth to babies who have very low weight and this negatively affects the born child's learning capabilities which also results in chronic effects since a mother's education is crucial to the well-being of the child. Hence, when the mother is less educated it threatens the child's well-being and ultimate social

functioning (Barrientos and DeJong, 2006). Thus, poor households' capacity to develop human capital essential to break away from the poverty trap will be undermined, (Samson, Lee, Ndlebe, Mac Quene, van Niekerk, Gandhi, Harigaya and Abrahams, 2004).

2.4. THE EFFECTS OF POVERTY ON CHILDREN

Poverty makes children more vulnerable within the societies they live. Khumalo (2013, p. 5644) defines vulnerability as "the likelihood of people or a group of people to fall into risk associated with poverty, like hunger, disease, homelessness and limited choices". Khumalo (2013) observes that citizens' constitutional right to dignified lives is infringed by poverty. ACCESS (2002, p.3) also stated that "Children living in poverty are denied their basic and fundamental Constitutionally guaranteed rights to "basic nutrition, shelter, basic health care services, and social services" (S28 (1)), and their "right to a standard of living adequate for his/her development", as provided for in the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child ratified by South Africa in 1995". Hall (2012) argues that money enables people to have access to a range of services; hence a lack of it results in children's rights to nutrition, education and health care services being compromised. "The right to social security is designed to ensure that people living in poverty are able to meet basic subsistence needs" (Hall, 2012, p. 88).

Child poverty and vulnerability have serious effects not only on children's quality of life but also on their quantity of life and this is reflected in the incidence of infant mortality for most developing countries. In South Africa the infant mortality rate has risen intensely from 45 per 1000 live births as of 1998 to 60 per 1000 live births (Venter, 2014). Thus, Barrientos and DeJong (2006) postulate that the widespread poverty and vulnerability found amongst children and households in most developing countries offer a strong motivation to find policy responses which are appropriate in addressing these challenges. Therefore, in mitigating the challenge of poverty in South Africa, the South African government is mandated to implement a comprehensive social security system as it is obliged to directly support children whose parents or caregivers are too poor to do so.

2.5 CONCEPTUALISATION OF SOCIAL SECURITY

Given the prevalent nature of poverty in South Africa, there is need for prevention and alleviation strategies to deal with this huge challenge. The provision of social security by the South African Government is one of the key strategies in place. There is consensus in both developed and developing countries on the importance of social security as a key strategy of reducing poverty and enhancing the poor to have access to basic needs that are essential for them to maintain a minimum standard of living (Patel, 2005) and Kaseke (2010) also argued that in South Africa, social security is an essential mechanism of preventing as well as alleviating poverty and inequalities that are in the country. South Africa is a country which is viewed as having a fairly well developed social security system and according to Midgley and Kaseke (1996) as cited in Patel (2005); the country borrows several aspects of its social security system from European and British social security systems.

Social security has been conceptualised in so many ways, however both the developed and developing world have accepted the International Labour Organisation's definition. The ILO defines social security as "the protection which provides for its members through a series of public measures, against the economic and social distress that otherwise would be caused by the stoppage or substantial reduction of earnings resulting from sickness, maternity, employment injury, unemployment, invalidity, old age and death, the provision of medical care, and the provision of subsidies for families with children" (International Labour Office (1989, p. 29).

2.6. THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM

Post-1994, the South African government has progressed in developing comprehensive social security system which is comprehensive, (Committee of Inquiry into a Comprehensive System of Social Security for South Africa, 2002). South Africa's economy and social infrastructure is much more developed than that of its neighbouring countries however; it is also severely affected by high rates of poverty, unemployment as well as great incidences of HIV/AIDS prevalence, (Barrientos and DeJong, 2006). Thus, Neves, Samson, van Niekerk, Hlatshwayo and du Toit (2009) postulated that although South Africa is a middle-income country it suffers severe inequalities and the existing structural poverty results in the majority of the population suffering

economic oppression, hence when one accurately understands the nature of poverty and vulnerability faced by the country, this provides an important conceptual foundation from which to understand South Africa's social protection.

2.7 THE DIFFERENT FORMS OF SOCIAL SECURITY

Social insurance, social assistance and universal benefits are the main forms of social security (Kaseke, 2010). Although the country has adopted the ILO definition of social security within the South African context, social security in actual fact refers to social assistance (social grants) and social insurance.

2.7.1 Social Insurance and Occupational Insurance

Social insurance is another form of social security. It is defined as benefits that are organised by the state and these benefits are obtained through specific contributions made by the employers and employees, (Patel, 2005). According to Patel (2005) the South African social insurance scheme includes the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF), Compensation for injuries and diseases at work fund and the Road Accident Fund (RAF) (Kaseke, 2010).

According to Kaseke (2010) UIF is a safety net that protects workers against unemployment and it is provided under the Unemployment Insurance Act 63 of 2001. The Compensation for injuries and diseases fund which is provided under the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act (COIDA) 130 of 1993 compensates employees for work related injuries and diseases, (Patel, 2005). This scheme's funding is only through the employer's contributions, but it does not cover domestic workers which clearly reflect a coverage gap within the social security system (Kaseke, 2010).

2.7.2 The Road Accident Fund (RAF)

The Road Accident Fund (RAF) is defined as a form of a protective safety net which protects people against the risk of being involved in road accidents caused by the negligence of a driver in another motor vehicle, (Leibbrandt, Woolard, Finn and Argent, 2010). Therefore, the fund provides compensation to victims of road accidents. RAF scheme is not employment based; hence its funding comes out of an obligatory fuel levy on fuel sales (Patel, 2005). Patel (2005) postulates that motor vehicle accidents are one of South Africa's major cause of death and

disability, hence this form of protection is essential. Further, it is in Patel's view that RAF is a key example of social policy which promotes human development and provides a protective safety net for people against unforeseen contingencies (Patel, 2005). The RAF is not necessarily a part of social security, however it plays a crucial role in providing social protection to people and it also complements other forms of social assistance programmes which already exist (Patel, 2005). Nevertheless, this fund has been heavily criticised for having poor administration as compensation for victims takes a very long time and also for its low payments which are inadequate in instances which involve high medical bills for those who have incurred injuries (Patel, 2005).

Various authors have noted that the "Conceptions of social security being organised around the formal wage economy are considered inappropriate in addressing needs in developing countries" Kaseke (2000) argues that the ILO's conceptualisation of social security is organised around formal employment therefore, it is inappropriate to developing countries for instance in Africa given the high rate of unemployment that is prevalent. Globally social security systems within the developed world were traditionally based on the existence and functioning of a nuclear family, male-headed household with the male figure as the breadwinner of that family more so, the social security system was structured around policies for the fully employed which restricted the coverage of social assistance as the majority of the population had work/employment related benefits (Patel, 2005).

According to Lund (2002) as cited in Patel (2005) it is important to note that given the high rates of poverty, unemployment, high rates of people employed in the informal economy, and the evolution of family structures within the South Africa context, the above form of social security benefits are irrelevant in the country. Based on the above challenges, the Taylor Committee for Inquiry into a Comprehensive Social Security broadened the conceptualisation of social security to supporting the marginalised, unemployed and working poor through providing social protection in forms such as social assistance was vital.

2.7.3 Social Assistance

Patel (2005) argues that social assistance is a form of safety net which protects the poor and or households against the risk of falling into chronic poverty, hence contemporary social assistance

within the South African region is considered as a very progressive one in comparison with other countries which fall within the same range of development. According to Patel (2005) the nature of social assistance grants in South Africa is that they are state-funded non-contributory and means-tested benefits. Leibbrandt et al. (2010) highlights that these benefits from the state are provided to designated vulnerable groups in society such as children and the elderly amongst others who struggle to meet their basic human needs. According to Patel (2011, p.110), “Social assistance therefore forms part of a wider social protection strategy complemented by the provision of publicly funded compulsory basic education, healthcare, housing, basic services, welfare services, public works and support for micro and small enterprises”.

The South African social security system comprises of different forms of social assistance programmes or social grants which include the State Old Age Pensions, disability, foster care, war veterans, care dependency, social relief of distress (food parcels) and the child support, (Patel, 2005). Later in this paper, an in depth description of the three grants specifically provided to children will be outlined and these include the Care Dependency Grant (CDG), Foster Care Grant (FCG) and the Child Support Grant (CSG). The country’s social security policy is underpinned by several instruments from international to local levels and these will be discussed in the following section.

2.8 INSTRUMENTS UNDERPINNING SOCIAL SECURITY

2.8.1 International Level

At the international level, there are various instruments which emphasise the right to social security and this section will focus on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) as well as Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. According to the UNICEF (1989), member states of the convention must recognise that every child has the right to social security including social insurance as stipulated in Article 26 of the CRC. According to Article 26 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, “State Parties shall recognise for every child the right to benefit from social security, including social insurance and shall take the necessary measures to achieve the full realisation of this right in accordance with their national law”, (UNICEF, 1989, p. 8). Article 26 of CRC, also mentions that where appropriate, the benefits should consider the

resources, circumstances as well as other factors in which the child and/or the child's primary caregiver live in, (UNICEF, 1989).

The UDHR of 1948 is another instrument at international level which also protects human social security. As a state party, South Africa has to comply with Article 25 of the United Nations (1948, p.25) which states that "motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance". According to Article 25, it is fundamental for all persons to have a right to an adequate standard of living as this enhances the health and well-being of individuals and families by meeting their basic needs which include food, clothing and the right to social security when one's livelihood is threatened by circumstances beyond the person's control, (United Nations, 1948). Therefore, South Africa's provision of social assistance or specifically the CSG is a key mechanism which seeks to realise the fundamental right to social security provision as provided for under Article 25 of the UDHR of 1948.

2.8.2 Regional Level and sub-Regional levels

There are also instruments at the African or regional level and this section will examine the African Union Social Policy Framework as well as the African Charter on the rights of Welfare for children. According to the African Union (2008), the Social Policy Framework for Africa has social development programmes that have a human/people-centred approach which covers issues such as social welfare and protection of vulnerable groups in society for instance children. The framework also strives towards alleviating poverty and improving the quality of people's lives. Social protection is also a key area that is recognised by the member states and their aim is to improve and strengthen the social protection schemes which include social security (African Union, 2008). It is important to note that the CSG is a form of social security for children; hence South Africa provides the grant as a poverty alleviation strategy.

The African Charter on the rights of Welfare for children is an instrument that protects children. For instance, article 23 of the charter protects the rights of refugee children and it states that these refugee children must be receive appropriate protection and humanitarian assistance, (Organisation of African Unity (OAU), 1999). Furthermore, article 14 states that a child has the right to enjoy physical, mental and spiritual health care which includes providing the child with nutritious food as well as safe drinking water amongst others, OAU (1999). Therefore, through

the provision of the child support grant to children in South Africa including to refugee children who meet the eligibility criteria, the country as a member state is complying with the provisions of the African Charter on the rights of Welfare for children.

Article 10 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in SADC (2009) stipulates that all member states are expected to create enabling environments which will allow workers to enjoy their right to sufficient social protection and social security benefits. According to the Charter, member states should provide adequate resources and social protection to the unemployed, (Charter of Fundamental Rights in SADC, 2009).

2.8.3 National/ Local Level

At the national or local level, there are several instruments which speak to social security and a few of these shall be outlined namely the Constitution, the Social Assistance Act 13 of 2004, the South African Social Security Agency Act 9 of 2004 and the White Paper for Social Welfare.

2.8.3.1 The South African Constitution

Kaseke (2010) argues that the uniqueness of the South African social security is that it is derived from its constitution. In chapter 2, section 27 of the Republic of South Africa (1996, p. 13) makes provisions for the right to social security and item 1 (c) states that “Everyone has the right to have access to social security, including, if they are unable to support themselves and their dependents, appropriate social assistance”.

Furthermore, according to the Republic of South Africa (1996), section 28 of chapter 2 then makes specific provisions for children’s rights which include their right to family or parental care, right to be protected from neglect, right to basic needs such as shelter, basic health care services, nutrition and other social services. The provision of social assistance is one of these as its provision enables caregivers to meet the rights and needs of the children. The Constitution also stipulates the importance of engaging in action which is in the best interest of the child and this is one of the key objectives of the Children’s Act and Regulations (2010) where the child’s best interests are paramount in all matters which concern the child, (Children’s Act and Regulations 2010). Social security provision is amongst these key areas, thus it is evident that

these pieces of legislation safeguard children's right to social security through social assistance or social grants.

2.8.3.2. The Social Assistance Act 13 of 2004

The Social Assistance Act 13 of 2004 underpins the provision of social assistance to persons, to provide for the mechanism of such assistance and to provide for the establishment of an inspectorate for social assistance, (Government Gazette, 2004). According to the Government Gazette (2004, p. 8), the Social Assistance Act 13 of 2004 has the following objectives:

1. Providing for the administration of South Africa and the payment of social grants and this includes the CSG and other grants
2. Making provision for social assistance and determining the qualification requirement in respect thereof,
3. Ensuring that minimum norms and standards are prescribed for the delivery of social assistance for instance, the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) is to appoint an investigator where abuse of the grant is suspected and lastly,
4. To provide for the establishment of an inspectorate for social assistance.

2.8.3.3 The South African Social Security Agency Act 9 of 2004

As highlighted in the third objective of the Social Assistance Act, the South African Social Security Agency Act 9 of 2004 provides for the establishment of the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) as the agent responsible for administering and issuing payments of social assistance as well as the payment of other forms of social security and also providing related services, (Government Gazette, 2004).

2.8.3.4. The White Paper for Social Welfare 1997

The White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997 advocates for a comprehensive and integrated social security system (Republic of South Africa, 1997). The principles, guidelines, recommendations, proposed policies and programmes for developmental social welfare in South Africa are stipulated in the White Paper for Social Welfare. According to the Republic of South Africa

(1997) the need for a South African social security system which is efficient is clearly stated in the White Paper. Chapter 7 of the White Paper for Social Welfare focuses on the provision of social security whose definition in this paper covers various public as well as private measures which provide cash, in-kind or even both forms of benefits in circumstances where one is inevitably affected by poverty and also in instances where child maintenance is needed (Republic of South Africa, 1997). According to the Republic of South Africa (1997) the White Paper states that poverty prevention and alleviation are some of the key domains of South Africa's Social Security System and social assistance which in South Africa is in the form of social grants is one of the four major elements within the system.

2.9 THE MODEL OF SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY THAT INFORMS SOUTH AFRICA'S SOCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

According to Patel (1991, p. 56) models are defined as “useful conceptual frameworks which aid the categorisation of phenomena and the patterns of relationships between variables”. It is important to note that social policy models are representations of ideological constructs, hence in reality there is no single modality that exists in its pure form, in fact in real world situations, a combination of these models usually apply in the context of the majority of developing countries including South Africa (Patel, 1991). The following section will examine the residual model of social policy and how it has shaped the provision of social assistance within the South African region.

2.9.1 The Residual Model

According to Wilensky and Lebeaux (1965) as cited in Patel (1991), the residual model to social welfare is informed by the ideology that state social welfare provision is of last resort as the state should only intervene when normal structures such as the individual, family and society have broken down or failed to meet basic human needs. Patel (1991) argues that the model is strongly characterised by minimal state intervention measures in providing for and financing social welfare services, social security, social assistance and other various forms of social benefits. According to Gray (1998) such intervention is regarded as a minimalist role of the state. The residual model to social welfare assumes that the individual, family as well as private market are functioning normally, hence should be able to provide for people's needs and only when these

have failed or collapsed then the state will intervene,(Yeates, 1999). Proponents of the residual model believe that social welfare provision should be short-lived or temporary and therefore only provided when one is in a crisis such that the state welfare provision will stop as soon as the crisis has ended or when the individual has recovered and is now able to meet their basic human needs by themselves.

This conception of social welfare is associated with the neoliberal ideology which advocates minimal state intervention. The principle of selectivity is therefore central to this model as it is used as a key criterion through the means-test that potential recipients go through before they qualify to receive the grant. However, this model tends to discriminate and marginalise other groups within society as welfare coverage does not reach to them if they are ineligible after the means-test. The residual model therefore raises issues of stigmatisation as some people in receipt of the grant having concerns of being labelled as welfare users, (Stuber and Schlesinger, 2006). Furthermore, it may contribute towards the re-enforcement of status differentials.

2.10 TYPOLOGY OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIAL ASSISTANCE (GRANTS) FOR CHILDREN

Social grants for children are provided by the South African social security system. The South African social security system provides three forms of social assistance/grants to children namely the Care Dependency Grant (CDG), Foster Care Grant (FCG) and the Child Support Grant (CSG), (Neves, et al., 2009). Barrientos and DeJong (2006) argue that these grants target childhood poverty; they shall be discussed in depth in the following section.

2.10.1 Care Dependency Grant (CDG)

The CDG has specific requirements which are to be met for one to receive the grant. According to SASSA (2014), the child must be below 18 years and having a severe disability which calls for special care. More so, the child must not be cared for in a government institution in order to qualify, (South Africa Government Services, 2014). To qualify for the CDG, a state medical assessor has to submit a medical assessment report which indicates that the child has a severe disability and is therefore in need of special care, (South Africa Government Services, 2014). A means-test is carried out to determine eligibility. An applicant must not earn more than R151 200

per year if single or more than R302 400 if married, (Kelly, 2014). Currently, the value of the care dependency grant is R1350, (South Africa Government Services, 2014) and as at 28 February 2014, a total of 120, 014 children in South Africa were in receipt of the CDG, (SASSA, 2014).

2.10.2 Foster Care Grant (FCG)

A foster child is defined as a person below the age of 18 years who has been placed in the custody of a foster parent by the court due to reasons such as being orphaned, neglected, abused, abandoned or being in any form of risk, (South Africa Government Services, 2014). Patel (2005) argues that the intention of the foster care grant is to ensure that children are provided with home environments that are secure and nurturing. To qualify for the grant one must be living in South Africa and must be a citizen, permanent resident or refugee who must be living with and caring for the foster child. The FCG is not given to the biological parents but to the foster parents, (Kelly, 2014). Neves, Samson, van Niekerk, Hlatshwayo and du Toit, (2009) argue that the FCG is not means-tested because fostering a child is not regarded as a poverty issue but rather a method of caring and protecting children who are vulnerable or at risk of some of the issues highlighted earlier. According to Kelly (2014), this grant is valued at R830 every month and as at 28 February 2014, the number of FCG recipients was recorded to be 498, 981, (SASSA, 2014).

2.10.3 Child Support Grant (CSG)

According to South Africa Government Services (2014), for one to qualify for the CSG, he or she must be the child's primary caregiver for example, the child's parent or grandparent or must be a child above 16 years heading a household. Applicants must be citizens or refugees or permanent residents of South Africa and both the child and caregiver must be residing in the Republic. It is mandatory for all children between the ages of 7 and 18 to be attending school for their caregivers to be eligible for the grant, (SASSA, 2013). The grant may not be issued to single persons whose income is more than R34 800 and to married couples with a combined income of more than R69 600 per annum, (Kelly, 2014).

Furthermore, according to South Africa Government Services (2014), to be eligible, the child must be below the age of 18 years, not cared for in any state institution and must be living with a

primary caregiver who is not in receipt of any form of pay to care for the child. In terms of caregiver receipt of the grant, Patel (2011, p.109) states that “the child support grant is a cash transfer paid to the caregiver of a child under 18 years who qualifies based on a means test”. Patel (2011) also highlights that the child’s caregiver may be the parents, grandparents, relatives or a nonrelatives of the child. It is also important to note that one cannot get the CSG for over six children who are not biologically or legally adopted by the person applying, (South Africa Government Services, 2014). According to South Africa Government Services (2014), the value of the CSG per child is R310 per month and a total of 11,044,494 children are receiving this grant as at 28 February 2014 making it the largest grant in terms of the number of beneficiaries. Below is an overview of how this CSG emerged or developed.

2.11 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO THE CHILD SUPPORT GRANT

The Child Support Grant, (CSG), succeeded the old State Maintenance Grant (SMG) which during the apartheid regime mainly benefited the white population, (Makiwane, 2010). According to Triegaardt (2005), the CSG was launched on 1 April 1998 to replace the SMG. Makino (2013) argues that the Lund Committee on Child and Family Support was instrumental in designing the CSG and it made recommendations which enabled African households to access to social grants for children.

According to Makiwane (2010), the establishment of the CSG meant an extension of benefits to other racial groups. The expansion of the children’s grant was also in terms of the age group as Makiwane (2010) argues that the SMG was provided to children up to six years of age but the new CSG covers children up to 18 years, (Makino, 2013). The major difference between the SMG and the CSG is that the latter accommodates or caters for every poor child from any background but its main target is communities that were historically marginalised and discriminated against. The CSG’s target group is young impoverished children, (Triegaardt, 2005). Although the grant is designed to benefit every poor child, the reality is that not all children are benefiting due to various reasons which can be administrative, logistical or technical, (Makiwane, 2010).

In some instances, caregivers do not have adequate documents required and this hinders them from accessing the CSG thus reducing the number of beneficiaries who are meant to be in receipt of the grant. According to Frederick and Govender (2002) as cited in Goldblatt (2005), failure to access birth certificates and identity documents is a huge barrier which hinders some people from accessing the CSG. However, Makino (2013, p. 35) states that “social grants in South Africa are not a relief for the few, narrowly targeted poor who are in exceptional circumstances, but they have a relatively wide coverage”. Having said this, it therefore makes sense when authors argue that these social grants reduce poverty but do not have an impact on the gini-coefficient because Bhorat, Van der Westhuizen and Jacobs (2009) (as cited in Makino, 2013) found out that apart from poor households benefiting, middle-income households are also in receipt of the social grants. This results in the gap between the rich and the poor continuing to widen.

2.12 OBJECTIVES OF THE CHILD SUPPORT GRANT

One of the key objectives of social welfare in South Africa is poverty alleviation, (Van der Berg and Bredenkamp, 2002). The CSG came in more as a poverty alleviation strategy rather than a prevention strategy, (Triegaardt, 2005). This is so because poverty was already prevalent and there was need for action to possibly eradicate or reduce it. According to Triegaardt (2005, p.252) the CSG had four immediate objectives that it sought to achieve and these are to:

- (i) ensure greater access for poor children to an integrated and sustainable security system in the country,
- (ii) provide a child grant on an equitable basis to those in need regardless of family structure, or tradition or race,
- (iii) prevent children from unnecessarily entering or remaining in statutory substitute care and
- (iv) keep children off the streets and out of juvenile detention centres.

Therefore, the CSG was a means of alleviating child poverty by ensuring that the poorest children in society are allowed the opportunity to access resources.

2.13 THE USEFULNESS OF THE CHILD SUPPORT GRANT

According to Hall and Woolard (2012), the provision of social grants in South Africa significantly contributes to income poverty reduction particularly amongst low income earners. Although it is a very small benefit, the “Child Support Grant effectively buffered poor households against shocks, including the worst effects of the global recession of 2009/10”, (Hall and Woolard, 2012, p. 37). According to Neves et al. (2009) social grants inclusive of the Child Support Grant create potential economic benefits for instance, it increases beneficiaries’ abilities to cope with potential risks and insecurities, and therefore the Child Support Grant lessens recipients’ exposure to shocks.

The provision of social grants has generally resulted in positive outcomes with regards to improving the lives of vulnerable and poor people. Hall (2012) argues that the child support grant not only helps children to realise their right to social assistance but also improves children’s access to food, education and other basic human needs, thus the grant enables children’s access to various services. Patel (2011) postulates that the Child Support Grant has various developmental effects as they facilitate human capital development through an improvement in children’s access to health, education and nutrition. Neves et al. (2009) also support this as they highlight that there has been an improvement with regards to nutritional intake, health, growth and school attendance amongst child beneficiaries whilst the opposite has been noted amongst poor households of non-grant recipients.

Patel (2011) also mentions that the majority of the Child Support Grant beneficiaries indicated that they used the grant money to buy food, paying school fees and buying school uniforms. For many, the Child Support Grant is a vital source of income as Patel (2011, p. 379) indicates that in areas such as the Northern Cape and Limpopo, “Overall, the grant made up 40 percent of household income and closer to half of household income”. Although some have argued that the grant is inadequate, Neves et al. (2009) argue that it has been discovered that some recipients of the CSG are innovative and find ways of multiplying the little income they earn from the grants by participating in informal savings clubs which allow them to invest and save on the very little that they have. Neves et al. (2009) further highlight that it seems that the CSG potentially has effects which promote labour, as the grant has the potential to improve a woman’s capacity to go

out and seek for employment, have the capacity to access credit and/or can act as starting capital for income generating activities. According to Barrientos and Sherlock (2002) cited in Patel and Hochfeld (2011, p. 230) “This resonates with international literature which promotes cash transfers as a stimulus for economic activities”.

Despite the CSG having numerous benefits to society, there are also challenges that both the beneficiaries and the officials who administer the grant are faced with and some of these include the ideology that providing social grants fosters a “culture of dependency”, misuse or abuse of the grant, incapacity and corruption amongst others. The following section will discuss these issues in more detail.

2.14 KEY CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH THE GRANTS FOR CHILDREN

Both the recipients and the grant administering agency are faced with challenges which have negative implications. For example, several young mothers in receipt of the grant have been accused of deliberately falling pregnant so as to access the grant and they are also attacked for abusing or misusing the grant thereby, undermining the grant’s usefulness, (Goldblatt, 2005). Nevertheless, Noble and Ntshongwana (2008) dismiss these allegations as research done shows no evidence of young women or teenage girls falling pregnant so as to access the grant. Zhou (2012) argued that the selectivity or means-testing approach that the officials use as eligibility criteria is problematic as the most needy tend to be excluded from the system whilst on the other hand the recipients face stigmatisation which is associated with public welfare and social services that are not universally provided to society. Patel (2005) also argues that the means-testing approach is discriminatory and thus undermines the coverage within the social security system.

Broadly, the South African social security system has been criticised for its categorical and means-testing approach as this is viewed as perpetuating discrimination and social exclusion of those groups of people who do not meet the eligibility criteria but are in need. It is discriminatory in the sense that if you are not elderly, a war veteran, a child or disabled amongst other eligibility criteria you will be excluded from the social security system. Triegaardt (2005) highlights that the majority of the working poor earn very little income which they cannot save, more so they would not qualify for social assistance because their earnings are higher than the eligibility

threshold hence fall outside the selection criterion. This results in many poor people suffering exclusion when it comes to social grant receipt.

Means-testing also raises a serious concern of coverage as this means-testing limits coverage which is one of the system's limitation as Kaseke (2010) stresses that despite the important role played by the South Africa's social security system in the prevention and reduction of poverty and inequality in the country it is limited mainly because of adopting a categorical approach as well as the system's lack of comprehensiveness as the benefits are only available to some not all.

According to Philip (2002) and Nhlapo (2002) as cited in Goldblatt (2005), high levels of illiteracy and inadequate information about the grant are obstacles that prohibit people from accessing the grant. Furthermore, Liebenberg (2001) (cited in Goldblatt, 2005) also postulates that another obstacle to accessing the grant is that there are severe delays in the processing of the grant and some have to wait for long periods of time before they can access their grants. Nhlapo (2002) and Nkosi (2002) (as cited in Goldblatt, 2005) argue that incompetent, corrupt, inefficient and unhelpful social welfare officials also act as a serious barrier to accessing the grants. This is also supported by a report by SASSA (2012) where corruption and fraud resulting from an ineffective administrative system were highlighted as some of the key challenges that are associated with the provision of the social grants. According to SASSA (2012), this corruption and fraud is due to the inefficient administrative system that is utilised.

According to Khosa (2013) one of the challenges outlined by participants from her study is that recipients of the grant use it for their own benefit and not in the child's best interest. This utilisation for personal benefits came in form of purchasing various items such as clothes for themselves, accumulation of debts through gambling as well as through the purchase of alcohol at the expense of children (Khosa, 2013). This raises serious concerns as child poverty persists despite government's efforts to alleviate this problem.

2.15 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER

The literature reviewed in this chapter highlighted the key challenge of poverty and child poverty that is in the face of South Africa. This results in the need to understand measures available in mitigating the problem of poverty and a track record of how these were established alongside the

various legislative instruments which underpin the provision of social security in South Africa. Furthermore, the literature reviewed in this chapter outlined the nature and scope of the country's social security system and how its establishment and functioning has resulted in the Child Support Grant reaping various benefits for children for instance through access to food, improved school attendance and health services to mention a few and these indicators have ultimately contributed towards the alleviation of poverty and particularly child poverty in South Africa. It is evident that the South African social security system has made commendable strides in the prevention and alleviation of poverty amongst the country's poor despite some of the challenges within the system.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the research methodology that was employed in this study namely the research design, the study population and sampling procedures, the research instrument, the data collection method as well as data analysis. Ethical issues that were considered during this study, the limitations of the study and the method of data verification are also discussed in this chapter.

3.2. RESEARCH DESIGN

Babbie and Mutton (2001) state that a research design is essentially a plan on how a researcher intends to conduct his or her research. This study adopted a qualitative research approach which was explorative and descriptive in nature. According to Fouche and Schurink (2011) in De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2011), an exploratory study is concerned with answering the “what” questions. In this study, the researcher sought to obtain in-depth information on what recipients’ perceptions were with regards to the utility of the Child Support Grant. Hence, the qualitative research design was relevant to this study as it allowed the participants to freely express themselves on how they felt about the utility of the Child Support Grant therefore allowing the researcher to obtain richer and thicker descriptions of the phenomenon under study.

Monnette, Sullivan, DeJong and Hilton (2014) argue that a qualitative research approach enables access to data which is valuable as it provides a deeper and richer understanding of people’s everyday lives as well as behaviour which includes knowledge of people’s subjective experiences. Furthermore, the qualitative research approach was suitable to this study as argued by Marlow (2005) that it enables researchers to see the participants’ experiences and how they attach meaning to their lived experiences.

3.3. STUDY POPULATION AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES

The study population consisted of primary caregivers receiving the child support grant aged 25 years and older residing in the Tembisa community. A sample of 12 participants was drawn from the recipients of the CSG using snowballing sampling. Richard and Grinnell (1993, p. 164) argue

that, “The strategy of snowball sampling is to locate a few individuals in the population of interest and ask them to identify other people in the same group”. Babbie and Mutton (2001) state that snowballing is a process of accumulation as each participant refers another to the study. Strydom (2011) in De Vos et al (2011) argues that snowball sampling techniques is analogous to a snowball which picks up more snow and gets bigger when it’s rolled along in snow which is wet and sticky. The first participant of the snowball sample was a neighbour to the researcher’s colleague. This participant then referred the second participant to take part in the study and the participants continued to make referrals until the researcher had obtained twelve participants who constituted her sample.

The participants of this study were quite difficult to find given the stigma and other negative perceptions associated with the child support grant thus, the researcher found the snowballing sampling technique applicable to her study. The snowballing sampling technique is used when accessing research participants is a challenge, (Strydom (2011) in De Vos et al. (2011)). The snowballing sampling technique enabled the researcher to build her sample as the participants tended to be open and more willing to participate in the study when they were approached by people whom they knew and shared their experiences with, (Padgett, 2008).

3.4. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTATION

A semi-structured interview schedule was used as the research instrument for this study. Legard, Keegan and Ward (2003) highlight that semi-structured interview schedules comprise of a list of questions that guide the researcher when conducting the interview. Fouche and Schurink (2011) as cited in De Vos et al. (2011), postulate that semi-structured interviews have more flexibility to both the researcher and the participant. The semi-structured interview schedule usually comprises of open-ended questions which allow the researcher to probe so as to gain clarity or elaboration and it also enables the researcher to follow up on interesting topics that emerge from the interview, (Fouche and Schurink, 2011 in De Vos et al. 2011). Thus, this semi-structured interview schedule is a guide that helps the interviewer to remain in alignment with questions that answer the study’s objectives and also gives the researcher liberty to adjust, modify, clarify, add more questions or remove those that are unnecessary or whose responses have been provided in the progression of the interview. Semi-structured interviews allow “Participants to share more

closely in the direction the interview takes and they can introduce an issue the researcher had not thought of”, (Fouche and Schurink, 2011,p.352 as cited in De Vos et al. 2011, p. 352).

Semi-structured interviews are useful as they allow for detailed and in-depth collection of data. The semi-structured interview schedule was useful in this study because the open-ended nature of the questions allowed the participants to provide detailed responses thus providing the researcher with insights on the utility of the child support grant. The researcher was therefore able to collect rich data due to the nature of the interviews that she conducted with her research participants.

3.4.1. Pre-testing

Monette et al. (2014, p. 9) define a pre-test as “the preliminary application of the data-gathering techniques to assess their adequacy”. The semi-structured interview schedule was pretested with one participant who was not included in the actual study. Pretesting the research tool is vital because it enhances the researcher to assess the reliability, validity and applicability of the questions included in the interview guide or schedule, (De Vos, et al. 2011). Furthermore, pretesting is important because it allows the researcher to obtain instant feedback on the research tool and if there are any ambiguous or extraneous questions the researcher can deal with these before conducting the actual study so as to improve the quality of the interviews conducted during the actual study, (Legard et al). Furthermore, pretesting also allows the researcher to have an approximation of the time it would take to conduct the interview, (Legard et al. 2003). After conducting the pre-test the researcher modified the participant information sheet. The researcher changed the time taken to conduct the study from approximately 45 minutes to approximately 30 minutes because her pilot study took about 20 minutes apart from this change, no further changes were made as the pre-test revealed that the instrument was adequate and appropriate for this study.

3.4.2. Use of Audio tape Recordings

The researcher tape-recorded all the interviews. This was only done with the consent of the research participants. According to Rubin and Babbie (2001), a tape-recorder is essential to a qualitative researcher because of the in-depth nature of qualitative interviews. Tape-recording

allows for accurate verbatim records and it also enhances the researchers' interviewing skills as they actively attend to the participants' responses. Legard et al. (2003) add on to say that this also allows the researcher to probe and seek clarity due to the active listening that results when the interview is being recorded. The researcher was able to collect accurate data through the use of the tape-recorder and she was also able to clarify certain questions as well as seeking clarity on certain questions without fear of losing some data as all data was captured in the recorder. Thus, the use of the tape recorder made the process of retrieving information or data collected from the interviewees simpler.

3.5. DATA COLLECTION

Semi-structured in-depth face-to-face interviews were used to collect data and this enabled the researcher to gather in-depth information on the utility of the Child Support Grant. All interviews were conducted with the consent of the participants of the study and on average each interview was about twenty five to thirty minutes long. According to De Vos et al. (2011) and Richard and Grinnell (1993), face-to-face semi-structured interviews have flexibility, they allow the researcher to incorporate more open-ended questions, to probe, seek clarity and also allow the participants to openly share their views

3.6. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Collected data was analysed using thematic content. According to Creswell (2009) analysis of data entails making sense of the raw data, interpreting it and theorising it. During the interviews the researcher apart from making use of the tape recorder also made notes which enhanced her to retrieve and analyse the collected data. According to Creswell (2009) data analysis encompasses making sense of raw data, establishing meaning out of it and formulating theories. The researcher was guided by the steps that Creswell (2009) identified as crucial when analysing raw data and these steps will be discussed in the following section.

3.6.1. Procedure for data analysis

De Vos et al. (2011) argue that data can be analysed during the collection process as well as after all the data has been collected hence, the process of analysing data is seen as twofold. The researcher analysed the data during the actual research as data was collected and detailed or in

depth analysis was done after the researcher had completed collecting all her data. When analysing data, Creswell (2009) argues that there are several steps that the researcher follows and below is a detailed procedure of how the researcher employed these steps.

According to Creswell (2009), the first step is for the researcher to organise and prepare all the raw data that was collected. In analysing data at this stage, the researcher wrote her transcripts, typed her field notes and scanned all the collected data. The researcher then carefully read through all data so as to become familiar with it and to obtain a general sense of what the data could mean, as the researcher read the data, she also made notes. Creswell (2009) notes that the third step is coding, a phase which is referred to as the process where material is organised into segments which are also known as chunks. Coding the data is important before one extracts meaning from the data. The researcher coded her data by organising it into segments, the researcher then read deeper and as she read she was able to identify the themes as they emerged from the data. The researcher made use of qualitative narratives to represent the identified themes. Finally, the researcher interpreted or provided the meaning of the data which was based on the researcher's personal understanding and it was also derived from comparing the information from the reviewed literature with the findings of the study, (Creswell, 2009).

3.7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The following section will discuss some of the ethical issues that the researcher considered in this study.

3.7.1. Approval from Ethics Committee to conduct study

The researcher carried out the study after obtaining approval from the University of the Witwatersrand Ethics Committee (Non-Medical). Babbie and Mutton (2001) argue that ethics committees have the responsibility to assess research proposals for any ethical dilemmas when studying human beings. The research committee is also responsible for ensuring that the risks faced by the research participants are minimal before the proposal can be approved, (Babbie and Mutton, 2001).

3.7.2. Informed consent

Obtaining informed consent is another ethical issue that the researcher took into consideration. To begin with, the researcher ensured that all the participants read and understood the participant information sheet before giving their consent. Thereafter, the researcher obtained the participants' consent by not coercing them but asking them to sign the consent form to indicate that the purpose, procedures and their rights as participants which include right to withdraw at any given time and the right to access the findings of the study had been adequately explained to them. Babbie and Mutton (2001) argue that participants must be given accurate and complete information prior to the study and they must sign a statement which shows that they understand and agree to take part in the study voluntarily. Therefore, the researcher through the participant information sheet, informed the participants about possible publication and that a summary of the key findings would also be made available to those who make a request for it. The researcher also informed the participants that data would be kept safely in a password protected computer. Since the qualitative research approach that was employed involved the collection of in-depth or rich data, the researcher made use of an audio-tape recorder. However, before making use of it, the researcher obtained the participants' consent in the form of a signed tape-recorder consent form.

3.7.3. Voluntary participation and Right to withdraw from the study

The researcher made sure that participation in this study was voluntary for all. To facilitate this procedure, the researcher asked every participant to show their voluntary acceptance to take part in the study by signing the informed consent form. On the form, it was clearly stated that participation in the study was strictly voluntary and during the interview, if one did not want to proceed with the study at any given time, he or she was free to withdraw from the study without any negative consequences. According to Rubin and Babbie (2005) as cited by Strydom (2011) in De Vos et al. (2011), no one is to be forced to participate in a study as participation must always be voluntary. The form also indicated that there were no incentives to participation in the study and that if the participant felt uncomfortable with answering any question, the researcher would proceed to the next question. Before commencing the interview, the researcher reinforced this verbally as some might have not read or understood the contents of the consent form.

3.7.4. Non-maleficence

Non-maleficence or doing no harm to participants is vital and in this study, the researcher ensured that there was no harm posed to the participants. According to Richard and Grinnell (1993), the researcher must protect participants from any physical or mental harm. One way that the researcher used to avoid harming participants was not forcing them to answer questions that they felt uncomfortable with answering and by sincerely informing them that they were not prone to any form of risk if they decided to quit from the study at any given time. The research therefore ensured beneficence of all participants through maximising the benefits of the study and minimising the possibility of any form of harm, (Ross and Deverell, 2010).

3.7.5. Confidentiality & Anonymity

The researcher assured participants of confidentiality by not disclosing their real identities but rather making use of pseudonyms in the research report which disguise their actual identities. The use of pseudonyms also ensures anonymity since the participants' real identities will remain unknown to the readers. The researcher also assured participants about confidentiality by informing them that the collected data would be seen by the researcher and her supervisor only. The nature of the snowballing sampling method that was used in this study would have likely compromised confidentiality and anonymity during referral as participants would have possibly disclosed information amongst each other. However, to counteract the likelihood of this happening, the researcher informed all participants of the study on the importance of confidentiality and that they were not supposed to disclose the information that was discussed during the interview since disclosure of the information would jeopardise confidentiality and anonymity.

3.7.6. Publications and participants' access to research findings

As highlighted under the section on informed consent, the researcher has the responsibility to inform participants about possible publication of the study. The researcher informed the participants that upon request, a summary of the study's key findings could be made available. According to Strydom (2011), it is essential to ensure that the findings are available for public reading and the written report should be as clear as possible for readers to understand what the was wrote.

3.8. RESEARCH DATA VERIFICATION AND WAYS OF ENSURING TRUSTWORTHINESS

Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that there are four constructs which they believe have a good reflection of the assumptions of a qualitative research that is more accurate. The following are the criteria which were considered in ensuring the trustworthiness of the research, credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

3.8.1. Credibility/ Authenticity

Credibility is the qualitative equivalent of internal validity which is assessed in quantitative research in which the aim will be to demonstrate that the phenomenon under study or the inquiry has been accurately identified and described. Credibility is therefore a very important factor when a researcher is establishing the trustworthiness of the study, (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). According to De Vos et al. (2011), engaging in persistent observation in the field is one of the strategies used to increase the credibility of a qualitative study. To ensure trustworthiness of the findings, the researcher conducted the interviews in the participants' homes thus making them more comfortable and allowing them to express themselves freely hence, was able to make comparisons of the responses given with what she observed. The researcher also ensured credibility of the study through peer debriefing by welcoming her supervisor to scrutinize the research.

3.8.2. Transferability

De Vos et al. (2011, p.420) argue that transferability is when “the researcher asks whether the findings of the research can be transferred from a specific situation or case to another”. According to Shenton (2004), transferability is the equivalent of external validity or generalizability in quantitative research. Transferability or generalizing qualitative research findings to other contexts can be problematic, (De Vos, et al. 2011). However, to ensure transferability in this study, the researcher provided thick descriptions of the phenomenon under investigation which are sufficient for readers to have a greater understanding of it and be able to decide if the findings can be compared to other similar contexts thereby making use of this study as a frame of reference.

3.8.3. Dependability

Dependability is the qualitative alternative for reliability where the assumption is that the social world does not change hence when the study is repeated in the same context with the same participants, the results would not change, (De Vos, 2011). When conducting qualitative research, this assumption is problematic as interpretivists/ qualitative researchers believe that the world is always constructed hence replication is a problem, (De Vos et al. 2011 and Shenton, 2004). To ensure trustworthiness of the study, the researcher recommends that future research of similar nature be conducted.

3.8.4. Confirmability

In qualitative studies, confirmability is referred to as the equivalent of objectivity whereby the question is to find out if the evidence provided by the researcher corroborates with the findings that came from the participants and informants and not based on the researcher's preferences, (Shenton, 2004). In ensuring trustworthiness of the research, the researcher employed a data-oriented approach as argued by Shenton (2004). This was done by ensuring that the findings of the study emanated from the data collected from the participants and not from the researcher's own perceptions or biases.

3.9. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher's snowballing sampling technique can result in samples which are highly questionable in terms of representativeness however, as Babbie and Mutton (2001) argue, it is a strategy that is primarily used for exploratory purposes thus, it matches with the research design to be used in this study. Another limitation is that participants might have provided the researcher with responses that they felt the researcher wanted to hear as some might have feared that the grant may be discontinued. Lastly, the study sample of 12 participants is relatively small hence, generalising the findings to other contexts may be difficult.

3.10. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER

This chapter outlined the research methodology that was employed in this study. The chapter discussed the qualitative research design that was adopted in this study, the study population and sampling procedures, the research instrument, data collection method as well as data analysis

method which relate to the qualitative research approach. Ethical issues that were considered during this study, the limitations of the study and the method of data verification were also discussed in this chapter. In chapter four, the researcher will discuss the results or findings that came out of this study as revealed by the thematic content analysis method.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and discusses the research findings which emerged from the data collected in the study. The chapter will firstly discuss the demographic profile of the research participants. Thereafter, the findings will be presented and discussed according to the objectives of the study. The objectives of the study were: to explore how the recipients of the grant utilise the grant, to establish perceptions about the outcomes of the child support grant for the beneficiaries and to identify the challenges associated with the provision of the Child Support Grant.

4.2. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The 12 participants in this study were all female and primary caregivers to the children. Eleven of the participants were the recipients' mothers and only one participant was a grandmother who received the grant on behalf of the child. These statistics are in line with Case, Hosegood and Lund (2005) who observed that the child support grant is given to the child's primary caregiver as the person who takes primary responsibility for the child every day of the child's life and does not necessarily have to be the child's mother as grandmothers, aunts and fathers can also take up this role however, the mothers are usually the most common primary caregivers for the majority of children in receipt of the child support grant. The participants differed in age as well as employment status. The ages of the participants are illustrated in the table below:

TABLE 1: AGE OF PARTICIPANTS

AGE	FREQUENCY
20-30	3
31-40	6
41-50	1
51 and Above	2

The youngest participant of this study was 24 years old and the oldest was 60 years old. 50% of the participants were aged between 31 and 40 years old.

TABLE 2: EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF PARTICIPANTS

Employment Status	Frequency
Unemployed	9
Occasionally employed	1
Employed	2

Table 2 reveals the employment status of the participants. The majority of the participants were unemployed. Only two participants were employed however, they earned very low incomes hence supplemented their incomes with the child support grant. This is in line with Kelly (2014) who highlighted that the child support grant may not be issued to persons with high incomes that is; single persons whose annual income is more than R34 800 and married couples with a combined income of more than R69 600 per annum are not eligible to receive the grant. The employment status also confirms the findings done by Case et al. (2005) who argued that children for whom the grant is being obtained have care-givers who are most likely unemployed. This reflects that when one is unemployed there is no source of income hence; the grant becomes a key source of income.

4.3. UTILISATION OF THE CHILD SUPPORT GRANT

The first objective of this study was to explore how recipients of the child support grant utilise the grant.

4.3.1 Purchasing basic necessities (Food and Clothing)

Participants in the study highlighted that they used the child support grant to buy basic needs such as food and clothing. To illustrate this point, participant 2 who felt the grant was inadequate but was helpful gave the following response when she was asked how she made use of the grant:

“Aaah, the little things that he needs like shoes, well he is small but things such as the food, shoes, sweets, that’s basically it”. Participant 12 who also felt the grant was insufficient but enabled people with babies to cater for some of the babies’ needs commented as follows; *“I buy nappies, milk that’s all it buys anyway”*. To further confirm that the grant is used to buy food and clothing participant 5 indicated that the grant enabled her to do lay byes to buy clothes for her children. She said, *“Like now it’s December, since from October, November, and December I was doing my lay bye for my children’s clothes then on Monday I am going to take it out”*.

To illustrate this point further, participant 8 who observed how other community members made use of the child support grant gave the following response: *“Just like that girl you see, she is eeeh buying food for her children because she is not married and then she has five children and then school then carrying and the other one I know the one at the last house she gets for two boys and then she gets uniform and sometimes she is suffering because food and uniform are too expensive”*.

These comments substantiate the claim made by Hall (2012) that the child support grant improves and enables children to have access to basic needs such as food as well as other basic human needs which are essential for everyday life. These findings also support the argument by Patel (2011) who highlighted that most beneficiaries of the child support grant use the grant to buy food.

4.3.2 Meeting educational/ school expenses

Several participants in the study indicated that they made use of the grant to cater for the various school-related expenses for their children. Participants highlighted that they used the grant for educational expenses in different ways which included paying for the children’s school fees, buying school uniforms, paying for school trips as well as for buying food for the lunch boxes that their children carry to school whilst some gave their children pocket money to buy lunch at school. One of the participants said: *“Normally I buy food, the other ones are going to preschool its R300 and it’s the two of them so it’s R600 and its two of them and then the other money I put aside for lunch I don’t make lunch, I don’t have a fridge so I put aside the money so because there is 4 of them going to school”* (Participant # 7). Furthermore, participant 6 supported this in her response when she said: *“I buy clothes and then the school fees because the other one is*

three years and is going to the crèche so I [use it] to pay for the crèche but now she is going to school so yaa buying the clothes”.

This was also captured in a response by another participant who felt that the grant was not enough but highlighted that it was vital as she used it to cater for her children’s school-related needs namely buying uniforms and food for the lunch box. In her response when asked how she utilised the grant participant 4 said: *“School shoes, uniform, carrying like when they go to school for the lunch box, we buy food but still it’s not enough because I’m single”*. Participant 8 also indicated that she used the grant: *“For school, uniforms, school fees, carrying food”*.

School trips is another expense that some participants made reference to when asked how they utilised the grant. Caregivers mentioned that they used the money to pay for school organised trips and other functions. This was captured in a response by participant 5 who said: *“Eeeh, when the kids have a trip I pay for them for the young one I pay school fees, one hundred and fifty rands and the other one I buy some food”*. Similarly participant 2 said: *“For their money, I use it for their trips because the trips are coming after two months or they are gonna pay, as I said there is the functions they are making functions anytime. When my child says “mummy on such a date there gonna be something like this”, then I know I’ve got some money to pay for this”*.

These findings are in line with Patel (2011) who also highlighted that several recipients of the child support grant reported that they used the grant to pay for the children’s school fees as well as buying them school uniforms.

4.3.3 Participation in Stokvels or Gambling

Participants mentioned that they used the grant to pay their stokvel membership contributions. This was illustrated by participant 1 who said: *“Some they play stokvel with the money, some they buy food, clothing”*. Although Mashigo and Schoeman (2010) argue that stokvels contribute to social empowerment as they promote income generation, responsible behaviour as well as economic independence, the idea of using the grant to pay the stokvel contribution was not appreciated by some and this was indicated by one participant who felt that the benefits of participating in a stokvel do not accrue to the child but rather to the caregivers themselves hence

the grant was not being used in the child's best interest. This was apparent in the following statement: *"Some they generate more money, some they don't because as soon as they get the money they go and buy couches, fridges"* (Participant 1). The argument here was that the income generated from the stokvel does not necessarily benefit the child as extra income takes a few months to be generated and the items bought with the money do not have significant benefit to the child.

On the other hand, some participants indicated that some of their neighbours who received the grant used it to gamble however, this was not mentioned frequently. When asked about her perceptions on how other people make use of the grant, participant 2 gave the following response: *"They take a trip to gambling. Another participant indicated that "Some play the cards, some buy beer"*. The issue of gambling mainly through playing cards was reinforced by participant 4 who said, *"They are playing cards, they are drinking (bana) the children are filthy they don't wash them, they basically do not take proper care of the children , they don't have food, they don't have food (itaku)" [food for the lunch box for school]*. This confirms that some caregivers gamble with the grant which is meant for the children rather than ensuring that the children's needs are met. According to Dzebu (2006), community members reported some illegal gamblers to the police and many of these gamblers were found to be women in receipt of the child support grant.

4.3.4 Purchasing alcohol at the child's expense

Whilst some make use of the grant appropriately, this study also revealed there are some who abuse as well as misuse the child support grant. This finding was established when participants were asked about their perceptions on how other people make use of the grant. The perceptions of participants were that some caregivers use the grant to buy alcohol yet the children do not have sufficient food, do not have clothes and are affected by the cold in winter as they do not have warm clothing amongst others. Participant 6's response captures this *"Haa, they don't use it okay because some of them they use it for alcohol so the children don't get that money they go to school with no school uniforms but their parents get the Child Support Grant but they don't use it properly"*.

Similarly participant 5 noted that: *“..... And when its month end like this you can see that in that house they are busy drinking and you know there are too many children but they are receiving the grant and enjoying their selves and not using the money to take care of the children”*. Another participant said: *“Okay, from the stories that I have heard, it’s bad. I mean alcohol-wise, they use it for alcohol and not for the kids, in the kasis, you know how it’s like mos, many use it for alcohol and not for the kids”* (Participant 3). Furthermore, participant 9 said: *“So the boyfriend buys alcohol, smokes and what, what and if you see the kids they don’t have nice shoes, they don’t eat healthy foods you see the other women don’t know how to use the money”*.

These observations point to the fact that some primary caregivers abuse and misuse the grant at the expense of the children who should benefit from the grant. Children often starve with no food, have no clothes or shoes yet the grant whose purpose is to meet the children’s needs is being used to buy alcohol which deprives children of basic necessities and thus violates their rights. According to the Republic of South Africa (1996), section 28 of chapter 2, children have rights to family or parental care, protection from child neglect and maltreatment, basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing, basic health care services and nutrition. Thus, when the grant is misused or abused this violates the children’s Constitutional rights.

4.3.5 Use for personal gains

Using the grant for personal benefits was observed by several participants in this study. Given that the majority of the participants were employed, there was a tendency to use the grant not only for the children’s needs but also to meet the caregivers’ needs and wants. One of the participants argued that unemployment should not be an excuse for them to use the grant for their personal benefits instead of using it for the child’s benefit. This participant had this to say: *“I basically think, it’s not right because obviously you are unemployed for you to get that grant right, so when you get that three hundred and something then you go get your hair done go get your nails done and then when I look at your child he or she is suffering you know. I personally think it’s not a nice thing and it’s not an honest thing to do you know. Uummm, we need people who will wake up and realize the importance of taking care of children, I mean this is something that is helping us although it’s not enough but it’s something”* (Participant 12).

Another participant noted that *“People they don’t take care of this money. Like when they are receiving you can see the hair looks beautiful but when you look at the children they don’t have clothes, shoes and the food, you see”* (Participant 5). Similarly participant 2 had this to say: *“Well, I’m not sure because others, we are not the same. Others are not doing the same like me. They do for themselves making hair, buying clothes; the kids do not have shoes to go to school or even crèche something like that”*. The same participant when asked if this observation was made every time the grant is paid out gave the following response, *“Yes because if she is not getting that money the hair will remain like that its only after she has got this grant”* (Participant 2).

Participant 11 concurred and said, *“Some people just take the money and go to the salon use the grant to make their hair especially the girls they like to go and relax their hair and make their nails with the grant and other people they are drinking especially for me I am leaving in an informal settlement they use it to drink with the child’s money, which affects me a lot because I feel so sad because that money is supposed to buy your child something special but if you see the neighbour is buying a beer or just go to the salon and make some nails for me it’s useless...”*.

These findings confirm the findings of a study that was conducted by Khosa (2013), which also revealed that the caregivers of the child support grant utilised it for their own benefits.

4.4. PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE OUTCOMES OF THE CHILD SUPPORT GRANT TO THE BENEFICIARIES

The second objective of this study was to establish the caregivers’ perceptions about the outcomes of the child support grant. The study revealed the following:

4.4.1 Income security

The findings of the study revealed that the child support grant enabled beneficiaries to be more secure economically as the grant makes provision of income to many. In fact, the study identified that the grant provided income which the majority of the recipients rely on for their day to day living. Participant 9 confirmed that the child support grant was helpful in providing income for her family. She indicated that since she was not working, her husband was the family’s breadwinner and therefore took care of the family however, the grant eased the financial burden as it enabled the family to have income security. Hence, the grant enabled them to meet some of

the child's needs. This was revealed in the following statement, *"Uummm, it will be difficult because I have two kids and my husband it's not easy for him to maintain the two kids because it's the two kids, it's me and transport for him to go to work you see and I am not working it's not that I am sitting and not looking for a job, I am trying but it's not easy to get a job"*.

When asked about how discontinuing the grant would have an effect on the recipients, participant 11 said: *"It's gonna affect us, it's gonna affect us a lot because we are depending on the money especially when we are going to buy the uniforms, we are depending on that money and again we are depending on that money to buy our children clothes especially in winter because winter is very cold and where are we gonna get that money? Sometimes the child is sick and you have to take them to the clinic and sometimes there is no medicine there at the clinic so what are we going to do because we depend on that social grant to take our children to the clinic or to buy some medicine at the pharmacy"*.

Participant 1 concurred and said: *"It will affect me because I won't be able to have that source of income for my children"*. The same participant when asked about how discontinuing the grant would affect her she gave the following response, *"Yes, I will suffer. As long as I am not working I will suffer"* (Participant 1). This indicates that the grant is an essential source of income which is accessible to caregivers for them to look after the children. Similarly participant 6 noted: *"Yoo, we gonna suffer, we gonna suffer because just like me I say I depend on this grant, eeey we gonna suffer a lot because sometimes I used to ask myself if they cut this grant what will I do with my kids, what will I do with me, food, clothes you see so uummm I don't pray that they stop it"* (Participant 6).

Furthermore, participant 5 said: *"Eeey it's going to affect us very much, very much yaa because with at least SASSA you know that by the 1st of the month you are going to receive R310 like January you will receive R310 and you must know that the schools are opening on the 12th you must go and buy some jerseys or tunic or something to make lunch tins for the school"*. Without the child support grant, meeting essential basic needs would be a major challenge as the caregivers heavily rely on the grant. This was captured by participant 10 whom when asked how discontinuing the grant would affect them gave the following response, *"The child would die because we won't have anything"*.

Participant 2 pointed out that due to her low income and being a single mother and in view of the numerous responsibilities she had, her salary was inadequate hence the grant enabled her to have income security. She stated that, *“Yoo, it would affect me because, uummm the money I have got is small for doing everything in the house, so this helps me a lot”*. The same participant went on to highlight that as a single parent the grant was helpful as a supplementary source of income as she said, *“ Yes, yes, because if there was a father maybe everything could be better but now I’m the father and mother in the house”* (Participant 2). This finding is in line with Williams (2007) who indicated that there is considerable income security amongst recipients of the child support grant.

4.4.2 School Attendance

The study revealed that the grant contributed towards an improvement in school attendance for children in receipt of the grant. Participant 8 said: *“, “For school, especially for school because it’s the future for this new generation you see if the child is not going to school it’s a problem the next time she is being like a boy, the next time they are doing nyaope, cigarettes or this and that and then you start fighting”*. This statement confirms that when children receive the grant their school attendance improves and they become educated which is vital in fighting poverty. The child support grant made school and crèche attendance possible for many who were in receipt of the grant. This was aptly captured in a statement by participant 7 who confirmed that the grant improved school attendance. She said that if the grant was cut off it would be a severe problem because receiving the grant enables her to send her children to school. She indicated that: *“It’s going to affect us a lot, it’s going to affect us because let me say in my opinion like now my children are going to crèche I won’t be able to take them to the creche....”*.

This finding confirms the argument by Patel and Hochfeld (2011) who highlighted that an improvement in school attendance was observed in households that received the child support grant. Additionally, this finding also supports Samson et al. (2004) who argued that their study revealed that children in households which receive the child support grant and the older persons’ grant had higher chances of attending school. The finding reflects that school attendance also has an instrumental value as DSD, SASSA and UNICEF (2012) argue that the child support grant enhances positive developmental effects with ripple effects on the reduction of poverty,

vulnerability and risky behaviours amongst children and adolescents thus, creating a protective impact on the children as they are less likely to participate in behaviours that compromise their health and well-being.

4.4.3 Access to Health Care

It was also revealed in the study that the grant helped the caregivers to access health care facilities for the children. The participants highlighted that the grant enabled them to take their children to hospitals when they fall sick as well as when they want to buy some medication from pharmacies in cases where the medication is unavailable at the hospitals for free. The grant also enabled access to health care facilities through providing money to cover the transport costs in circumstances where the hospital was far. Participant 7 illustrated this when she said, “..... and I won’t be able to take my daughter to the hospital for check-ups and everything so for me it’s going to be a disaster because ahhh, it did happen that I didn’t have money because I was only getting money for the two bigger children so I didn’t have money. She did collapse here she nearly died so you see its going to be difficult in my situation its bad I have a diabetic child the other ones are fine but it’s a challenge with the diabetic child”.

Similarly participant 11 confirmed this by saying, “It helps me a lot, because sometimes the child is sick and you have to go to the clinic, you have to take a taxi to go to the clinic and sometimes at our public hospitals sometimes they don’t have the medicine so you will have to go to Clicks to a pharmacy and buy the medicine for the child so it has helped a lot”. This correlates with findings by Hall (2012) who argued that the child support grant enables recipients to have improved access to health care.

4.5. CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROVISION OF THE CHILD SUPPORT GRANT

The third objective of this study sought to identify the challenges associated with the provision of the child support grant. This objective focused on challenges however, the participants’ responses also pointed to ways of minimising the challenges associated with the provision of the Child Support Grant. Participants identified the following challenges:

4.5.1 CHALLENGES

4.5.1.1 Slow/ poor service by South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) officials during administration procedures

Participants highlighted that one of the key challenges they encountered was a very slow or poor service by the officials at the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) when initiating an application. Although some highlighted that technological improvements and the introduction of the SASSA card system was effective and efficient as people do not have to wait for very long queues at the pay points in contrast some felt that the service provision still needed to be improved as the administration process still takes very long. This was highlighted by participant 12 who said:

“Well, first and foremost when I went to register it was the most awful experience that I had. I left home at around 4 am because that place gets packed, you know. When I got there at about 5am I think I was the second or third in line, by 5:30 am, I think there were about 30 people so it was just an awful experience. They open late and then after opening, when I say open I don’t mean start working I mean the offices get opened at 8. After that they make tea, they will chat and they will do this, they will do that and mind you, the queue outside is accumulating. So I would say that was my challenge and it goes back to service delivery you know, so as people we also need to up our game and know that we are working. If a person is working for the government they must know that they are working for people and then comes the thing of the system being down, they can try and upgrade their system”.

Participant 8 confirmed this when she said, *“Haa to the SASSA baby when you go to SASSA and then sometimes the people who work at SASSA can give you a headache and then if you have no patience you can leave and then say ayi ah ah no more because you know our people sometimes when they are working with people they have short tempers, sometimes they just ignore you and then you must wait there for a long time. Maybe you woke up at 4 o’clock and then you go to do a queue and then after that you stay the whole day and then you don’t eat and then till maybe when the people say now its knock off time and then sometimes you get the help because they say now is the time to go”.*

This finding could also explain why some caregivers are reluctant to apply for the child support grant as the application process is complex and unpleasant and like participant 12 indicated, it goes back to poor service delivery by government officials which is a matter of concern. The finding is in line with DSD, SASSA and UNICEF (2013) who argued that the complex and time-consuming administration process alongside lack of hospitality and long queues at the SASSA service points acted as key barriers to accessing the child support grant and this was a contributory factor to caregivers lacking the time and motivation to apply for the grant.

4.5.1.2 Inadequacy of the grant

Some participants felt that the money was helpful however, they indicated that it was inadequate as they were unable to meet all their needs. This was outlined by participant 12 who said, *“Like I said before it’s not enough, you can either buy nappies or milk that’s it so I have my mother who is helping me out so I wouldn’t know about somebody who doesn’t have anyone to help them out I mean R300 is nothing but it’s something”* .

Participant 8 supported that the grant was inadequate considering the prices which are constantly increasing. She said: *“Yaa because things now are expensive but I say now we are happy because that amount we get we can do something but if the government can get another money just look at the budget and it’s alright they can just put another money because things are expensive and this money is too little you see”*.

Other participants felt that the grant was inadequate and this was not because funds were unavailable but they thought that the government was being stingy. For example participant 3 said, *“They do but they are stingy, that’s why I’m looking at you when you’re talking about the government”*. Participant 7 who also felt that the grant was inadequate indicated that relying only on the grant was problematic hence piece jobs are vital as they enable one to have another source of income apart from the grant. She concurred and said, *“I think they have more but are giving us less, I would say they are giving us less, the money is not enough like aaah, for me the money is not enough it is enough but it’s not enough because if it doesn’t meet all the needs like now I took out the money on Thursday and there was a graduation and all together when I take the money for the graduation its R600 the fee money for the creche and R400 for the graduation so that’s R1000 already that I had to pay now because I did not have the money earlier so I have*

nothing now, I have no money for food now. I am just hoping that the lady will call me for a piece job so that I can get that little money. Yaa especially now when it's December that's when the stress begins but during the year it gets better" (Participant 7).

To further illustrate this point participant 6 suggested that the government should consider increasing the amount boys receive because she highlighted that boys' clothes are more expensive than girls'. The participant gave the following remark, *"Yaa I have this thing, you see like our kids the boy and a girl so I was thinking if the Government could do this thing that if the child is a boy they can give us uummm, more money because boys are too expensive. Because now they say they are going to cut the money when the child is 18. From 13 to 14 you know they just demand things, I want this, I want this, and so we can't afford to do all those things. Just like me I don't work I can't afford it"*.

The finding correlates with Zembe (2015) who highlighted that although it is important to acknowledge the fiscal constraints which limit the coverage and benefit levels of South Africa's social security system and child support grant the benefit level respectively, the amount of the child support grant is very low. Zembe (2015) postulates that beneficiaries have to pool other sources of income as the child support grant alone is not enough to meet the children's basic needs.

4.5.1.3 Abuse and misuse of the grant

There is a general perception that recipients of the child support grant abuse the grant and therefore it is not used at the best interest of the child. Therefore, there is stigmatisation on the recipients of the child support grant.

Participant 5 highlighted that the abuse of the grant starts from the application phase where people who are not entitled to or not eligible of receiving the grant continue to receive it. She said: *"Yaa the things that I am not happy, those people who are getting the grant like if the child passes away but still busy getting the money. So the Government must stop those people and even if those when they are working in the Government and getting the grant and they don't qualify yet there are those people who need, you can see that eeey these people they need but others they don't have ID, they don't have birth certificate you see"*.

This nature of abuse of the child support grant was confirmed by participant 1 who noted that: *“Like some they buy the certificate, the birth certificate from Home Affairs to apply for the Child Support Grant whilst they know they don’t have babies”*. Such form of abuse of the grant resulting from fraudulent actions such as these confirm that the inefficient administrative system used by SASSA could be the reason why the grant is abused, (SASSA, 2012).

Participants identified alcohol use as one of the major ways in which recipients of the child support grant misuse the grant. The study revealed that there were many caregivers who consume alcohol using the child support grant instead of buying food, clothing and providing for the children’s educational needs. This was stressed by participant 7 who said: *“You know it’s very sad when someone receives a child support grant and the person is not taking care of the child that’s very sad because uummm when I look at my kids, now it’s December and I have to buy them clothes and food and when I look at those other kids whose parents receive the grant but don’t buy food, they go buy alcohol and drink and to me when I look at them I am hurt because these children are kids they do not know nothing the other people they just take these children for advantage but they don’t know the consequences of what they are doing and I can’t go to the, to SASSA and tell them that uummm because I am scared. But I don’t know what I can say but I have seen a lot of people who do this but it’s not right”*.

Furthermore, participant 8 confirmed that the grant was abused and misused by some caregivers. She indicated that the grant was used to show off and to purchase unnecessary items instead of spending the grant in the best interest of the child. She said, *“..... The other ones just use it to buy liquor, dressing isgqebhe gqebhe [buying short skirts] with the money and earrings”*.

4.5.1.3 Lack of clarity on the documentation required

The issue of documentation was revealed in this study as one of the challenges associated with the provision of the child support grant although it did not come out frequently. One of the participants highlighted that the grant was once stopped as SASSA requested for some documents. This was highlighted in a response from participant 2 who said:

I was also getting the grant every month but when it came to April or May somewhere there then the money was stopped. They said I must bring aaahh, firstly they wrote me a letter saying I must

come and review the grant. So they wanted all the documents and I did it and took them back to SASSA. In March or April the money was cut so I went again to SASSA and told them about this problem that they wrote me a letter and I brought all the documents but still again they cut the money...? Then they say no eeh they give me another date to come back. This finding confirms the observation by SASSA and UNICEF (2013) that lack of correct documentation is a barrier to accessing the grant.

4.6.1 WAYS OF IMPROVING THE PROVISION OF THE CHILD SUPPORT GRANT

Having indicated the above challenges, participants also highlighted the various ways they thought would improve the provision of the grant as well as to minimise some of the challenges that have been discussed above. The following suggestions were made:

4.6.1.1 Increasing the grant

The study reveals that some participants felt that the grant was inadequate hence, the amount needed to be increased. This is affirmed in a response from participant 9 who said, *“They need to increase at least add a R100 or R200 let me say the government they were supposed to say its R500 only you see, if its R500 it’s reasonable”*.

The same sentiments were made by participant 10 whom when asked about her thoughts on how the government could ensure an improvement with regards to the grant gave the following response, *“If they increase the money we will rejoice”*. Nevertheless, others felt that increasing the grant would actually perpetuate a culture of dependency. This concern was not frequent, however, it was illustrated in a response by participant 5 who said: *“Yaa because if they can increase the money ooh you can see that many people would fall pregnant because they know that now if I’m pregnant I will get the money for the grant”*.

These findings confirm the allegation that Goldblatt (2005) makes that several young mothers who receive the child support grant have faced accusations of intentionally falling pregnant in order for them to continue receiving the grant. Though the allegation of women deliberately falling pregnant so as to access the grant resurfaced in this study, it was only made by one participant. So inadvertently the findings observed support Noble and Ntshongwana (2008) who dismissed this allegation based on scientific research which was conducted and revealed that

there was no evidence of young women or teenage girls falling pregnant with the aim of obtaining the benefits of accessing the grant. However, this study reveals that it is important to note that the need for the grant to be increased is high as this was highlighted by many participants in the study.

4.6.1.2 Accountability and holding offenders responsible

Accountability and holding offenders responsible for their inappropriate actions was identified as another way of ensuring the provision of the grant is improved. Several participants highlighted that caregivers should account on how they make use of the grant and those who are found using the grant inappropriately are to get the grant in the form of vouchers instead of accessing it as cash. Participant 1 said: *“I think for those who take the money or those who play the stokvel, they must investigate and then after that they must issue cards for them, specifically for them. If they find you misusing the money, they must give you the voucher card and the voucher card you must use it to buy clothing and grocery shops”*.

Participant 1 supported the idea of holding those who abuse or misuse the grant accountable. She said: *“.... they must say maybe every three months they must submit the slips or every six months submit the slip that she used the money in Edgars, buying clothes for children and all that or buying food for the children”*.

Although participants supported the notion of initiating food vouchers, some of them were somehow sceptical about this solution as they felt that it would disadvantage those who use the grant wisely. Their argument was that there are instances when one needs cash and not necessarily food for example when you need money to take the child to the clinic, to buy medication or to pay for school functions and so forth. This was aptly captured in a statement from participant 12 who said: *“I would say, I would really say they can do vouchers you know, and not give out cash but then maybe the baby needs to go to the clinic and the mother has no money to take the child to the clinic but I personally think if they can make vouchers for that three hundred and something that could benefit the child because giving out money is not necessarily saying here is money let me buy my child some milk but with the vouchers obviously I can't do anything but for me to go and get those things for the child?”*.

Participant 4 supported by saying: *“And if they waste then they must get vouchers but if they say we must get vouchers, we don’t need vouchers we need money.* This was confirmed by participant 6 who said. *“Because I think if I can say something bad it’s gonna hurt us, all of us because when I say they have to put a voucher where we can get food or clothes for the kids, some of the things we can’t get like maybe if it means we have to pay the school fees at school or crèche we can’t get like us, I don’t work I depend on the grant...”*. These statements confirm that although the vouchers were suggested as a way of ensuring that caregivers use the grant appropriately some participants were in contrast of this as they felt it would not be ideal as some of the children’s needs require the grant as cash not as goods or commodities. This confirms the findings of Department of Social Development (DSD), SASSA and UNICEF (2012) who highlighted that the counter argument of not switching to vouchers was because these vouchers were found to be inflexible hence, would restrict recipients from meeting some of their needs which could be non-food for example transport and other educational costs. Furthermore, a this switch from child support grant cash transfers to food vouchers was also found to most likely not work as the recipients could easily exchange them for other commodities which are not necessarily food per se, (DSD, SASSA and UNICEF, 2012).

4.6.1.3. Employment creation and Empowerment of primary caregivers of the child support grant beneficiaries

The study revealed that there is need to create job opportunities as well as to empower primary caregivers who are in receipt of the child support grant. Participants indicated that the main reason people heavily rely on the child support grant is because they do not have any other sources of income as they are unemployed of which the grant as the only income is insufficient hence, they suggested that if people are encouraged to look for jobs which will enable them to sustain themselves this could be a viable solution which will ultimately contribute towards poverty alleviation in many households. Participant 1 who felt that caregivers should not meet their personal needs with the grant but rather get a job or do something where they can earn some income said: *“..... I think they must insist like telling people you must go and apply for job, you must look for jobs don’t depend on the Child Support Grant it’s not yours”*.

In support of ensuring that people seek employment either formally or informally so as to have access to other sources of income and be empowered participant 3 stated that: *“Yaa, even the people they must stand up, they mustn’t sit and wait for the social grant. They must do something, maybe selling something to get [some] source of income”*. Participant 6 concurred and said, *“I think the Government must help us about the jobs or open ourselves businesses because if they cut this money and we just stay like this, there is no way”*. To illustrate this further participant 12 gave the following response, *“Uummm, you know this thing of relying on the government, I don’t know the rightful word to describe it but I would say we must take responsibility. I can’t rely on the government to raise my child you know. I think they are trying, they are trying at least they are doing something”*.

4.6.1.4 Need for Home Visits by Social Workers and relevant government officials/ Establish monitoring techniques

Participants in the study gave fairly similar solutions to minimising occurrences whereby the grant is abused or misused. They highlighted that it is through monitoring how caregivers make use of the child support grant. They indicated that there is need for social workers to take up this task and do visits of the home environment and also closely monitor the children at school so as to assess how the grant is being utilised. This came out frequently as several participants felt that when monitoring measures are put in place this will promote the appropriate use of the grant. Participant 5 said: *“Maybe a Social Worker can come and visit us like after three months, they have to check”*. This was supported by participant 11 who said: *“I think our social workers it’s like they can have like some people who go door to door and make sure that the money supports the child so they can send some people especially the social worker to visit door to door and look at how the child is...”*.

Participant 1 who supported this idea highlighted that whilst social workers are to carry the task of monitoring caregivers’ use of the grant, it is also important for community members to inform social workers of caregivers who are using the grant inappropriately so that such caregivers can be monitored. She said: *“If I see maybe that someone is misusing the money, I must report her to the social service. And then the social service they must send a Social worker to investigate or they must send a consultant from social service to come and do an investigation to check uummm*

if they are using the money correctly or what". Participant 9 indicated that another way of ensuring that the grant reaches its intended beneficiaries was not only for social workers to monitor the utility of the grant. She argued that the social workers could help those caregivers who are misusing the grant and or incapable of making use of the grant appropriately by buying whatever the child needs and hand it over to the children. This was captured in the following response: *"Social workers should come every month and buy those things for those who are misusing the money"*.

In monitoring caregivers and doing these home visits, participants highlighted that the social workers need to take note of the children's wellbeing and social functioning through observations as well as through enquiries. To confirm this participant 6 said: *"..... I think it's better if a Social Worker goes house to house and check the children at school, [at home to see if they have food], clothes, if the parents do something about the money I think that's the way"*. This participant emphasised the importance of Social Workers conducting home visits to check if children have access to food, clothing and other needs as well as ensuring that the caregivers do not misuse the grant.

Participant 4 supported by saying: *"They must maybe bring some Social Workers and they must just inspect, like you, they must monitor the home maybe section by section and see. You can see when somebody is abusing the money, you can see the children are dirty, it's not good, and it's not good"*. Further confirmation came from participant 11 who said: *"Uummm, I think very very important thing to do is visiting our community to make sure that the grant is feeding our children. It's like with orphaned children some people who receive the money for them are not using the money for the children but for themselves so the visits will help ask the children face to face how they are"*.

The study also revealed that it is important to ensure that caregivers are answerable in cases where the social worker identifies that the grant is being abused or misused. It was also highlighted that appropriate measures are to be put in place where evidence of inappropriate use of the grant is identified. This is illustrated in a statement by participant 8 who said: *"Uummm, that one is a difficult one maybe if there are people who use the money for grant uselessly I think government must take a step and then go house to house and look at what are you doing with this"*

money because when the children are suffering and not dressing alright you see, so government must try uummm, these social workers must go to the house and look mama what are you doing with the money of these children and then you must explain and if there is no explanation then government must take decision”.

This point of view was also held by participant 2 who indicated that the social workers can also disguise themselves so that the purpose of their visit is not skewed as many people are not prepared to welcome social workers as they are aware that when any form of abuse for instance neglect or ill-treatment of the child is observed it results in measures being taken against the offenders. She said: *“Oh, me I think the government can take out the people like social workers eeeh going around our places, uummm, entering their houses like people who wants water but looking at the kids whether the kids are clean or they are suffering. When they see mistakes they write down the address something like that because they can’t say we are social workers, people will run away”.*

4.7. CONCLUSION

This chapter clearly presented and discussed the findings of this study. The study revealed that several caregivers who receive the child support grant were mostly unemployed and were all women. Based on these findings I would conclude that there is a clear reflection of feminisation of poverty thus calling for ways of ensuring that women are empowered so as to help them navigate through the effects of poverty in order to ensure that it does not trickle down to the children. In so doing the prevalence of chronic or intergenerational poverty will also be minimised. This study also revealed that the child support grant has several benefits to its beneficiaries as it contributed towards income security, enabled beneficiaries to buy food, pay school fees, pay transport costs for school as well as to access health care services and medication however, the study also revealed that some recipients felt that the grant was inadequate and highlighted that there was need to increase this amount. The same study also discovered that the child support grant is being abused by some caregivers who gamble, use it for their personal benefits such as drinking alcohol, as well as maintaining their hair and nails.

Nevertheless, the study revealed some of the ways in which the provision of the grant can be improved so as to minimise the challenges that are associated with the provision of the child

support grant and these include: ensuring accountability of caregiver's use of the grant, introducing the food vouchers instead of cash, a call for home visits by social workers and other relevant social service professionals as well as a call to government to ensure that employment and empowerment opportunities are created.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the main findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study. The aim of this study was to explore the perceptions of the recipients of the child-support grant on the utility of the grant. A summary of the main findings of the study is presented according to the objectives of the study.

5.2. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

5.2.1. Objective 1: Exploring how the recipients of the grant utilise the grant

The study revealed that the child support grant is used for purchasing basic necessities such as food and clothing. Given that most of the children's primary care-givers were unemployed, the grant enabled them to buy food and clothes for their children or grandchildren. The findings revealed that some recipients buy clothes for their children using the lay-by purchase option as they highlighted that the grant is insufficient for them to do a once-off payment purchase. The grant thus enables children to meet basic human needs such as food and clothing.

The findings of this study revealed that the grant was used to meet the children's educational or school-related needs or expenses. In this regard, the grant was used to pay for school fees, to buy school uniforms, to pay for school organised trips and other school functions. The grant was also used for pocket money for the children to buy lunch at school. The child support grant was therefore used to cater for the children's educational needs thus allowing these children an opportunity to attend school or crèche.

Furthermore, the findings of this study revealed that the grant was used to pay for stokvel membership contributions and these contributions were made on a regular basis. The findings of the study also revealed that the grant was used for gambling which means that the grant was not being used in a manner that is beneficial to the child. The findings of this study revealed that the grant was used for buying alcohol at the expense of children's needs. Many bought alcohol with

the grant yet in some cases there was no food and no clothes especially winter/warm clothing for the children. This is in line with the general observation from the study that the grant was used for the caregivers' personal gains and not for the benefit of the children. The findings of the study revealed that some caregivers used the grant not only to buy alcohol but also to maintain their hair, nails and buying fashionable clothes at the children's expense.

5.2.2. Objective 2: Perceptions about the outcomes of the child support grant for the beneficiaries

In terms of the outcomes of the child support grant to its beneficiaries, the study revealed that the provision of the grant led to income security as households became more secure financially. Due to the low incomes or wages received and high levels of unemployment amongst the primary caregivers in receipt of the grant, the grant was an essential source of income thus becoming the key source of income. Therefore, the study revealed that the child support grant contributed towards income security for many families.

The findings also revealed that an outcome of the child support grant was that it improved school attendance amongst children in receipt of the grant. Participants felt that apart from the grant contributing towards school attendance, it also had an instrumental value in that it reduces the children's engagement in anti-social behaviours. Regular school attendance keeps these children busy thus creating a protective environment for these children as compared to them roaming around the streets during school hours and engaging in risky behaviours.

Another outcome of the child support grant to beneficiaries was that it resulted in improved access to health care. The findings revealed that the child support grant enabled caregivers to take children to health care centres such as clinics and hospitals when they fall sick. Caregivers reported that the grant was helpful as they used it for transport costs for example when the hospital or clinic are far away from their homes. The grant also helped with buying medication.

5.2.3. Objective 3: Challenges associated with the provision of the child support grant

The findings revealed that there are challenges associated with the provision of the child support grant. One of the challenges was that there was poor service by SASSA officials during the administration process. Although participants acknowledged that they were impressed by the

technological advancements particularly the introduction of the card system, the findings revealed that the service is slow and/or poor when one is initiating an application. The findings revealed that the application process takes long due to the long queues thus making the entire process unpleasant. It was also revealed in the findings that lack of clarity on the documentation required was another key challenge as it complicates the grant process.

Another challenge associated with the provision of the child support grant was the inadequacy of the grant. It was found that the grant is insufficient as it was unable to meet all the basic needs of the child. The findings also revealed that to counteract this challenge there was need to increase this grant. Another way of improving the provision of the grant in order to minimise the challenge of the grant being inadequate was through creating employment opportunities so as to ensure that care givers do not rely solely on the grant but have other sources of income which will empower them to be self-reliant and not depend on the child support grant.

Abuse and misuse of the grant was also a key challenge associated with the provision of the child support grant as participants felt that there was a general perception that the grant is either misused or abused by some caregivers. The findings revealed that there were fraudulent applications being made and ineligible people benefiting thus disadvantaging those who qualify and are eligible of receiving the grant. In order to minimise the challenges of abuse and misuse of the grant, participants indicated that there was need for all offenders to be held accountable for their inappropriate conduct. The initiation of food vouchers was seen as a strategy of preventing abuse of the grant. However, some participants noted that when the child support grant cash transfers are replaced with the vouchers, other non-food needs such as paying school fees and the like would not be met as food vouchers will not be able to cover costs of such a nature.

Furthermore, to minimise the challenge of misusing and abusing the grant, the findings also revealed that there was need for social workers and other relevant government officials to establish and implement various monitoring techniques which will help them in monitoring how the grant is used. It was suggested that social workers should conduct home visits so as to assess the home situation in which the children are living in.

5.3. CONCLUSION

The government is to be commended for providing the child support grant as a key poverty alleviation mechanism. The child support grant is one form of social assistance that has provided many poor households with a safety net thus, helping the poor and vulnerable children to meet their basic human needs. The grant has been helpful to several children as it is used to buy food, clothing, uniforms and paying transport costs amongst others. The grant's outcomes have been commendable as the grant enables recipients to have income security, improves access to health care and improves school attendance. The child support grant has therefore been able to alleviate poverty and allows children the opportunity to access basic social services.

As much as the grant is beneficial to the child, it also helps the caregivers themselves as they inevitable consume the food bought using the grant and also use it to pay their stokvel membership contributions. Nevertheless, the child support grant is in many instances used in ways which do not benefit the child but rather benefits the caregivers at the expense of children. One of the key challenges associated with the provision of the grant is the issue of the grant being misused and abused by the primary caregivers. This is a matter of concern which requires proper monitoring and intervention so as to ensure that the grant's usage in the child's best interest is maximised.

5.4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- There is need to engage in activities that will enable caregivers to become self-reliant as this will minimise abuse of the grant. If the primary caregivers were provided with opportunities for self-development through skills development or participating in self-help projects this may enable them to reduce their dependence on the grant. Additionally, employment creation would be a key strategy of empowering caregivers to become self-reliant and earn some income which would enable them to meet their needs. This would also ensure that the grant is used to meet the child's need.
- There is need to monitor the utilisation of the grant in order to curb abuse. Apart from social workers, auxiliary social workers and other relevant professionals, members of the community should also monitor their neighbours and report any form of misuse or abuse

of the grant. When school teachers suspect that the child's grant is not being used appropriately they should inform social workers who can then assess the situation.

- There is need to ensure that applicants are fully aware of the requirements for initiating an application. Furthermore, it is recommended that when SASSA officials decline incomplete applications they should advise applicants on the required documents.
- There is need to conduct another study which includes educators, SASSA and DSD officials, social workers and the child recipients themselves to find out about their perceptions on the utility of the child support grant.

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APPENDIX A:**ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**



Research Office

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)

R14/49 Matuku

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

PROTOCOL NUMBER H14/06/24

PROJECT TITLE

An investigation into the utility of the child-support grant: Perceptions from beneficiaries

INVESTIGATOR(S)

Ms SC Matuku

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT

Human and Community Development/Social Work

DATE CONSIDERED

20 June 2014

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE

Approved Unconditionally

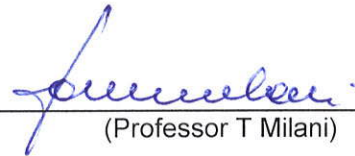
EXPIRY DATE

17/07/2016

DATE

18/07/2014

CHAIRPERSON


(Professor T Milani)

cc: Supervisor : Prof E Kaseke

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Secretary at Room 10000, 10th Floor, Senate House, University.

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee. **I agree to completion of a yearly progress report.**

Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES

APPENDIX B:**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

1. How long have you been receiving the child-support grant?
2. How much do you receive from the grant monthly and how do you make use of this money?
3. Apart from the child support grant what are the other sources of income that you have?
4. May you please share your views on how other people receiving the grant make use of the grant income?
5. In what ways has the grant enabled you to meet your basic human needs and other household expenses?
6. In what ways has your quality of life been improved by the grant?
7. If the grant was to be ceased immediately, how would this affect you?
8. Tell me about your experience when accessing the grant from South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) every month.
9. What are some of the challenges that you encounter in accessing the grant?
10. In your own view, do you think that the government has sufficient resources needed to serve you?
11. In your opinion, what do you think can be done to ensure an improvement in the issuing of the grant?

Probe areas

Age

Employment Status

Number of children in the household

APPENDIX C:

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Research Title: An investigation into the utility of the child-support grant: Perceptions from beneficiaries.

Good day

My name is Sally Chipu Matuku, and I am a postgraduate student registered for the degree Masters in Social Development at the University of Witwatersrand. As part of the requirements for the degree, I am conducting a research on an investigation into the utility of the child-support grant: perceptions from beneficiaries. The study hopes to obtain more evidence on the grant's utility as this might influence social welfare policy-makers to review the benefit level. It is hoped that the study will also enable policy-makers to address some of the challenges faced by beneficiaries in accessing the grant.

I therefore wish to invite you to participate in my study. Your participation is entirely voluntary and your refusal to participate will not be held against you in any way. If you agree to take part, I shall arrange to interview you at a time and place that is suitable for you. The interview will last for approximately 30 minutes. You may withdraw from the study at any time and you may also refuse to answer any questions that you feel uncomfortable with answering.

With your permission, the interview will be tape-recorded. No one other than my supervisor will have access to the tapes. The tapes and interview schedules will be kept in a locked cabinet for two years following any publications or for six years if no publications emanate from the study. Please be assured that your name and personal details will be kept confidential and no identifying information will be included in the final research report. If any quotes are used in the reports or published articles pseudonyms will be attached to the quotes so as to ensure confidentiality and anonymity of participants therefore, their personal identities will be disguised.

Please feel free to ask any questions regarding the study. I shall answer them to the best of my ability. I may be contacted on 0719718939 or my supervisor Professor Edwell Kaseke on +27117174477. Should you wish to receive a summary of the results of the study; an abstract will be made available on request.

Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in this study.

Yours sincerely

Sally Chipu Matuku.

APPENDIX D: CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATIO IN THE STUDY**DECLARATION BY THE PARTICIPANT**

I hereby consent to participate in the research project. The purpose and procedures of the study have been explained to me. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may refuse to answer any particular items or withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences. I understand that my responses will be kept confidential.

Name of Participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

DECLARATION BY THE RESEARCHER

I have explained the purpose and procedures of the study as well as the participant's rights. I agree with the conditions mentioned in the information sheet and consent forms and undertake to adhere to them.

Name of Researcher: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

APPENDIX E: CONSENT FORM FOR AUDIO-TAPE RECORDING**DECLARATION BY THE PARTICIPANT**

I hereby consent to tape-recording of the interview. I understand that my confidentiality will be maintained at all times and that the tapes will be destroyed two years after any publication arising from the study or six years after completion of the study if there are no publications.

Name of Participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

DECLARATION BY THE RESEARCHER

I have explained how confidentiality and anonymity will be ensured in the study. I have also explained the safe storage of the tapes to the participant. I agree with the conditions mentioned in the information sheet and consent forms and undertake to adhere to them.

Name of Researcher: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

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